The

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TWOPENCE

PASSING SHOW

PUZZLE—FIND THE TRAMP
by
WILL SCOTT

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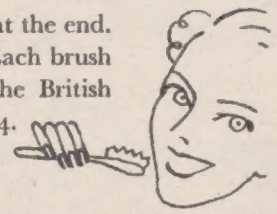

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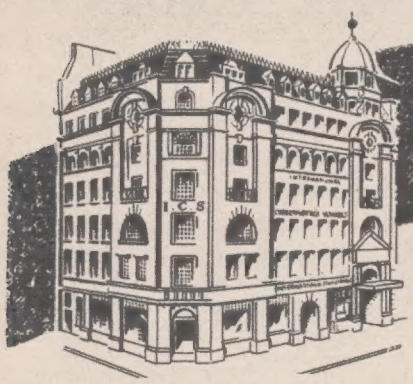

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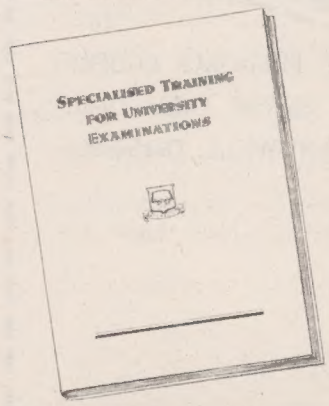

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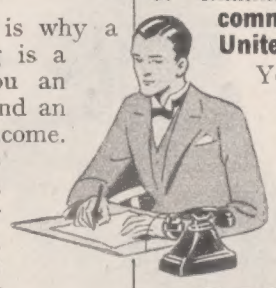

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The PASSING SHOW
No. 339 Vol. 7 SEPTEMBER 17, 1938

PUZZLE—FIND THE TRAMP

All the clues added up, but they gave the wrong total. It's a mystery within a mystery

BY WILL SCOTT

ILLUSTRATED BY BAILEY

He tugged at his belt and raised his voice, hoping thus to intimidate the amateur

TWENTY years is a long time and there aren't many left on the island now who can remember, and even they aren't too clear about what they *do* remember. They remember Macray, since it's fashionable just now on the Island to remember Macray, but it's funny the things they remember about him. Some remember him as pink and chatty and others as pale and unsociable. Some remember him as thirty and a mixer, others as forty and a kind of hermit. But they all remember Macray. Now. A week ago they couldn't even remember his name.

Somewhere in the wide world is Beaver, or whatever his name may be; most likely a tramp still, unpuzzled at last. If he is alive, that is, after all these years, and if he has *heard*. Amazing what you *don't* hear.

Cannan is still alive. Appropriately on the same old job. Cannan of the Big Five to-day. P.C. Cannan in those days. Swearing like a trooper now when he thinks of it all.

But as for Mr. Flagg, well nobody's seen or heard of him for years and years. He may be in Twickenham or Vancouver or Heaven or anywhere. Nobody knows and hopeless to start looking. That's what they all say.

The Island House is still there, past its prime and in decay, like the Island itself. Fun has gone elsewhere.

It was a simple enough case in the first place, that far-away night in November. If it hadn't been for the clues it might have been over and done with in no time. Cannan's telephone bell rang and when he answered they told him he was wanted on the Island. The Island House, as a matter of fact. Mr. Flagg had been brutally attacked. Night? It was two o'clock in the morning by then.

So down the High Street to the ferry went Cannan and dug out the ferryman, and over to the Island they went. It was as black as pitch except for a light in the window of the Island House and a street lamp with the word FERRY on it, behind their backs. There was a chill off the river that went through your bones.

"Blast Mr. Flagg," thought Cannan, "for getting himself attacked at such an hour."

"Something up?" asked the ferryman.

"Attack on Mr. Flagg or something," P.C. Cannan answered. "I don't know if *you've* noticed anything. P'raps you've been asleep?"

No, the ferryman hadn't, because he'd had toothache and had it now, and as for noticing anything, he'd heard a boat not so long ago—ten minutes, maybe—and it had *seemed* to come from the Island.

"Going where?" said Cannan.

"Going," said the ferryman, "up the river. Not that I saw anything. Too dark."

"Unusual, at this time of night?" said Cannan.

"Very," said the ferryman.

"Well, we'll see about that," said Cannan.

They came to the Island and he stepped out.

"You'd better go back," he told the ferryman. "The doctor will be coming."

He climbed the slope under dripping trees to where a light shone from the Island House. The Island was no place for Cannan in winter; for that matter, no place for anybody, except the few queer people who lived at the ramshackle bungalows under the trees. In the summer time it was a bit of all right, with the steamers going up and down the river and boats everywhere and a band and hundreds of City people taking it easy on the lawns and the pub doing a roaring trade. Pub it was, though Island House sounded better. A large pub. You could stay the night, if you liked. Though nobody was likely to want to stay the night in November.

Cannan needed his lantern under the trees, though that wasn't much of a help; the trees were so thick. When at last he worked his way round to the front of the house he found Amos—who was gardener, boatman, barman, anything—on the porch, with Mary, the maid, peeping over his shoulder. They were the whole staff at that time of the year.

"Now, what's all this?" said P.C. Cannan, stopping on the steps.

"Somebody's gone for Mr. Flagg," Amos answered. "Knocked him right out."

"We'll have a look," said Cannan and went in.

The main room on the ground floor of the Island House was a large lounge with a bar along one side. Hanging oil lamps lit it, in a way, and one was half-turned up now. It shone on the still figure of Mr. Flagg, the landlord, sprawled face down on the carpet. The side of his head was what Amos described as "a nasty sight" and three feet away was a poker. P.C. Cannan's technical eye took in other things; something that looked like a button, a broken wine glass, an overturned bottle of red ink, the smashed glass of the unconscious man's wristwatch. He had another look at that watch. The face was smashed in and the thing had stopped. It had stopped at five minutes to two.

"He's not dead?" said Amos, nervously.

"No, he's not dead," said Cannan. "But I can't do anything for him. The doctor's coming. I suppose you haven't touched anything?"

"No, we just 'phoned," said Amos. "We thought he was dead at first and best not to touch anything."

"That's right." Cannan worked round behind the bar and came to the cash register. It had been forced open and was quite empty. "Seen this?" he said.

"Yes," Amos nodded. "The burglars cleaned it right out. We saw that."

"How much in it?"

"A pound or two, no more. There's no trade here in the winter."

"How did you come to know about all this?" Cannan asked.

"It was Mary heard," said Amos.

"It must have been Mr. Flagg falling," Mary explained. "It woke me up. I didn't know what it was, so I waited a bit. Then I heard somebody, on the river, I thought—a boat. I looked out of the window, but it was too dark to see anybody, so I woke Amos and we came down and found him."

"What time was this?"

"It struck two," said Mary, "just before I woke Amos."

The gravel crunched and Dr. Lydd, the local, came in, with the ferryman behind to find out what it was all about. Dr. Lydd was the sort of man who took charge. He took charge now and left Cannan to retire into the background.

"If you won't be wanting me, I'll have a look round," said the policeman.

He walked out to the front porch and switched on his lantern. The ferryman hung about, hoping for news, but not liking to appear too inquisitive. When Cannan told him to keep out of it, he kept out of it, feeling snubbed.

Alone, Cannan made the round of the outside of the house and found what he was looking for. A flimsy window, easily forced, hanging on its hinges. There were smudges in the dust and smudges on the soil. You couldn't call the one fingerprints and, since the ground was hard, you couldn't call the other footprints. But that didn't matter. This was the way the fellow had got in.

Presently Cannan was aware of the lapping of oars in the water and a light on the south bank of the river. He went down to the landing stage.

"Something up?" a voice called out of the darkness.

Cannan waited, still and silent, and the shape of a boat could be seen close to the landing stage.

"Who are you?" asked the policeman.

"Come to that, who are *you?*" said the voice. "And I asked you what was up. My name's Jupe. That's my cottage on the river bank. I saw lights here and came across. I have lost a boat."

"Lost it?" said Cannan.

"Had it pinched," said the voice of Mr. Jupe, "by a slimy tramp with a beard a couple of miles long."

"How d'you know?" said Cannan. "You'd better come ashore."

So Mr. Jupe tied up his boat and came ashore.

"I don't know," he said, "but it's a damn good guess."

He was an undersized man with a pointed face, who looked as if he expected little from life and was getting less than he expected. He wore a belt and spent most of his time hitching up his trousers.

He told his simple story. Beaver (as he called the tramp) had appeared about sundown, squatted on the river bank, chewing a grass and watching the Island House. After an hour of this Mr. Jupe had gone out and asked him what he wanted. Beaver had replied that he'd given up wanting things years before, because it never came off. Then he'd gone away. He'd come back and been told to clear out. He'd gone away again, and now Mr. Jupe had awakened in the middle of the night and, seeing a light on the Island, had got up, dressed, come down and found one of his two boats missing, had climbed into the other one and come across to see what about it.

"Police?" he said, after ending his story with a tug at his trousers.

"P'raps," said Cannan, "—mind I only said p'raps, your boat went upstream about fifteen minutes ago."

"Well, I can't look for it in *this*," said Mr. Jupe. "But you don't say what's up."

Cannan told him all about Mr. Flagg.

"Dangerously hurt?" asked Jupe.

"Doesn't look too good to me," Cannan answered.

"Beaver'll get ten years and serve him right," said Mr. Jupe. "I didn't like his face."

They went up to the Island House and Cannan, leaving Mr. Jupe and the ferryman to entertain each other, went inside and said what he'd got to say to the doctor.

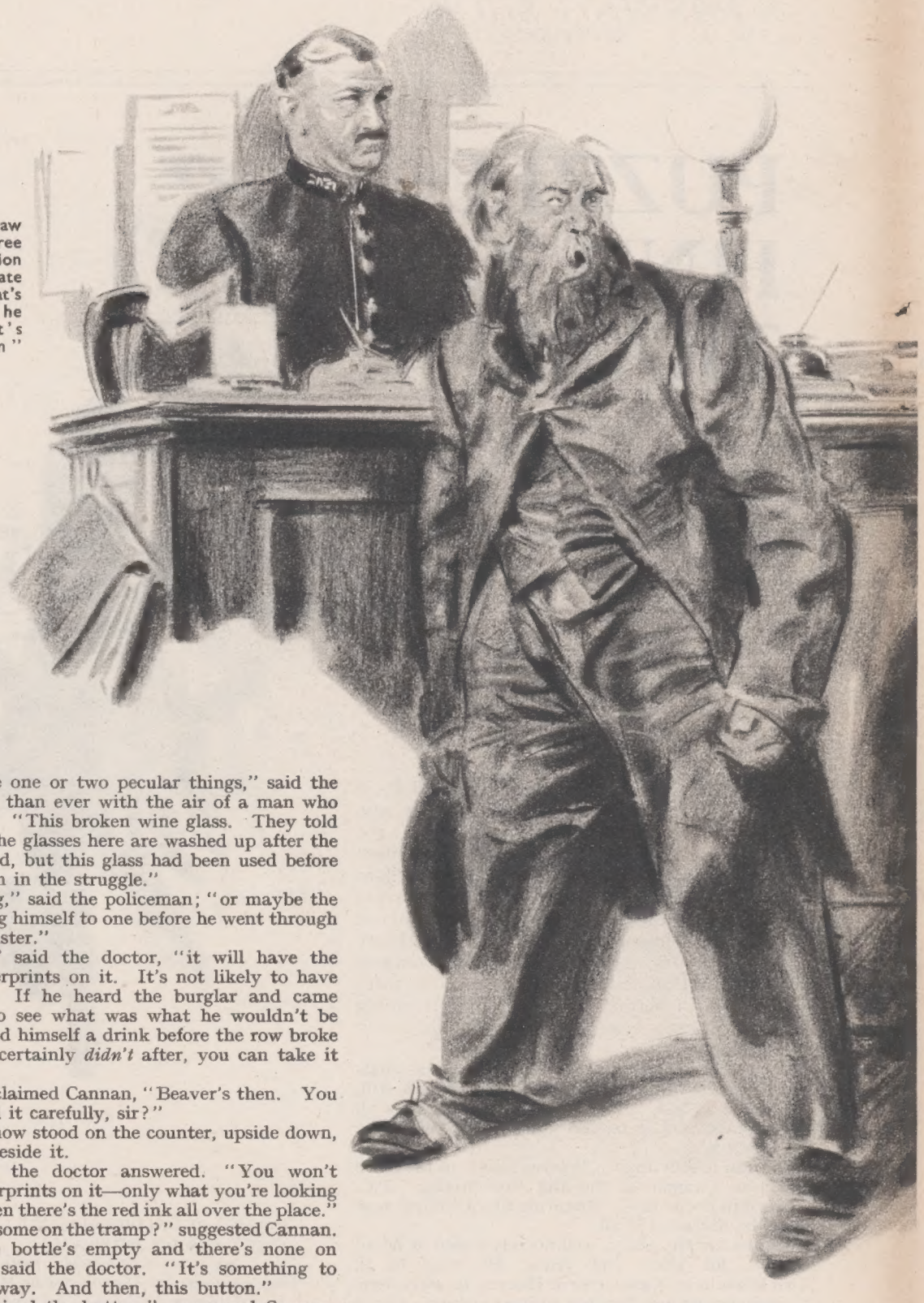
Mr. Flagg had been moved usptairs and the doctor had done what he could.

"He'll probably have to be moved to hospital," said he.

"Did he say anything?" Cannan inquired.

"He won't say much for twenty-four hours at least," replied the doctor. "And probably for longer than that."

"It seems to have been a tramp," said Cannan, "a tramp with a beard. Seems to have stolen a boat on the river bank. Rowed across here and knocked out Mr. Flagg, gone through the cash register and rowed away upstream in the boat. Attack was round two o'clock, by what Mary and the broken watch tell us. And the ferryman heard a boat going up the river about that time. Long beard. Oughtn't to be difficult to trace. I've found the window he got in by."



When Jupe saw Beaver in Three Ash police station he didn't hesitate a second. "That's the fellow," he said. "That's the very man"

"There are one or two pecular things," said the doctor, more than ever with the air of a man who took charge. "This broken wine glass. They told me that all the glasses here are washed up after the place is closed, but this glass had been used before it was broken in the struggle."

"Mr. Flagg," said the policeman; "or maybe the tramp helping himself to one before he went through the cash register."

"If it *is*," said the doctor, "it will have the tramp's fingerprints on it. It's not likely to have Mr. Flagg's. If he heard the burglar and came downstairs to see what was what he wouldn't be likely to stand himself a drink before the row broke out, and he certainly *didn't* after, you can take it from me."

"Ah!" exclaimed Cannan, "Beaver's then. You have handled it carefully, sir?"

The glass now stood on the counter, upside down, the button beside it.

"I have," the doctor answered. "You won't find my fingerprints on it—only what you're looking for. And then there's the red ink all over the place."

"Might be some on the tramp?" suggested Cannan.

"Well, the bottle's empty and there's none on Mr. Flagg," said the doctor. "It's something to look for anyway. And then, this button."

"Ah, I noticed the button," murmured Cannan, who looked as if he thought the doctor was laying on the Sherlock Homes a bit too thick.

"Two or three strands of brown cloth attached to it," added the doctor, "and sewn on with brown thread."

"I noticed that, too," said Cannan, who hadn't, but who, after all, *did* represent the Force and thought that people ought to realise.

He tugged at his belt and raised his voice, hoping thus to intimidate the amateur.

"Pity the poker's got a fancy handle. *It* won't tell us much. Still, I reckon we've got enough. Long beard, money in his pocket, brown suit, possibly red ink on it, possibly fingerprints like the one on this glass. It's like signing a confession. These fellows always give their own game away. And all for a couple o' quid."

"There's just one other thing," said the doctor. "Your tramp's most likely got a black eye or a bent nose or a gash on the chin you can see a mile off."

He looked at the policeman and the policeman looked at him. Cannan badly wanted to say, "You'll excuse *me*, doctor, but *I* noticed that first." He hadn't, however, the slightest idea of what had been noticed. He felt that this wasn't quite playing the game.

"Mr. Flagg's right knuckles are cut and bleeding," Dr. Lydd explained. "Were, that is to say, until we washed them. He scored one bull's eye before he was knocked out; and not in the stomach, either, not on anything *padded*. Right on the nose, as likely as not."

"Couldn't have caught himself on the counter as he went down—or the floor?" asked Cannan.

"He *could*," agreed the doctor, "but he didn't. It's a clean bruise on his knuckles. No dust or anything like that. I should save these," he added, pointing to Exhibits A and B, on the bar counter.

Cannan found a small cardboard box somewhere, and in it he carefully placed the broken glass and the button.

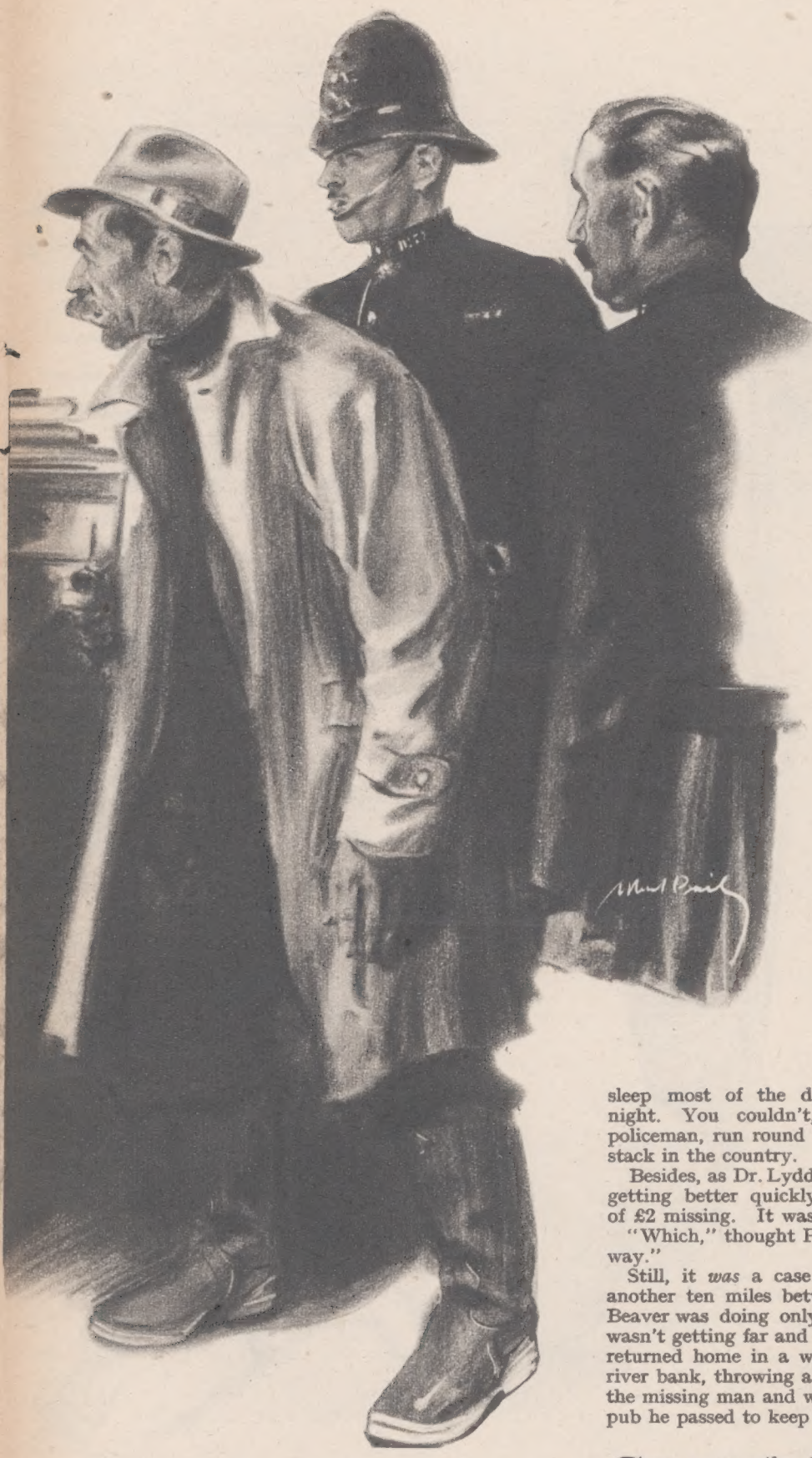
"Old Beaver," he said, "was a fool. Asking for it. Well, he'll get it now."

"Beaver?" said the doctor.

"The tramp," said Cannan.

It was now nearly three o'clock. Promising to send a nurse across to the Island as soon as possible and himself look in immediately after breakfast, Dr. Lydd snapped the catches on his case and strode to the door. Cannan went too, telling Amos and Mary to telephone the station at once if there was any further sign of the tramp. Outside he promised Jupe that he'd have his boat back for him before the day was out; then doctor, policeman and ferryman passed under the damp trees to the ferry and home.

The fog seemed to thicken with daylight and when P.C. Cannan set out on his bicycle he realised it wouldn't be as easy as he'd thought. There were no B.B.C.'s, no S.O.S.'s in those days.



Stations for several miles around had been warned by telephone, but with the thick fog everywhere and Beaver probably keeping to cover in the daytime, finding him wasn't going to be as simple as talking about it.

Cannan recovered Mr. Jupe's stolen boat, a mile up the river; but it gave no clear clue that it had been used by Beaver, or by anybody else in particular. It *had* been used, and that was all you could say.

The constable got off his bicycle an exasperating number of times and asked the same question until he was sick of the sound of it, but it seemed to get him no nearer to Beaver. The afternoon brought rain, and Cannan gave it up in disgust for the time being, returning to the station to learn there was nothing to learn, and then to the Island to find out what was happening there.

But nothing was happening on the Island. Mr. Flagg, before noon, had recovered consciousness for a short time, Cannan was told, but had since gone off again. He had said he remembered little of what had happened and had not seen enough of his assailant to be able to recognise him again. Cannan took his fingerprints and later compared them with those on the broken wine glass. Obviously the latter were not Mr. Flagg's.

"Beaver's, as we thought all along," Cannan told himself. "But having his fingerprints isn't enough. Where's Beaver himself?"

The next day came news of a bearded tramp from a pub in a village five miles up the river. The tramp had been and gone, leaving little impression beyond that of his beard, but he put P.C. Cannan back on his bicycle again, to do the five miles to the village. But neither the landlord of the pub nor the boys of the village could tell him much more than he already knew. The boys of the village remembered the bearded tramp well. They had followed him, calling him rude names. He was a tall tramp and a short tramp, a youngish tramp and an oldish tramp and he had left the village going towards Ellington, towards Curry Vale, towards Three Ash. At any rate he had a beard.

"As foggy as the weather," thought P.C. Cannan, "the stuff you pick up when you begin to pick up evidence."

The night on Monday-Tuesday had been the attack. Here was Wednesday nearly gone and the fellow not brought in. Of course, it wasn't as easy as it looked. Beaver might sleep most of the day and walk most of the night. You couldn't, just because you were a policeman, run round the four sides of every haystack in the country.

Besides, as Dr. Lydd had reported, Mr. Flagg was getting better quickly and it was only a matter of £2 missing. It wasn't as if it was a *big* case.

"Which," thought P.C. Cannan, "don't come *my* way."

Still, it *was* a case and he cycled on, putting another ten miles between himself and home. If Beaver was doing only five miles or so a day, he wasn't getting far and couldn't *be* far. So Cannan returned home in a wide circle, starting from the river bank, throwing a sort of imaginary net round the missing man and warning the landlord of every pub he passed to keep his eyes open.

Cannan was rather taking the case to heart. He was young and ambitious then and even if it was only a £2 burglary and attack, it was something better than no light on your car or no licence for your dog, which was the kind of thing that had come his way so far.

"We'll get him. We're *sure* to," he comforted himself, riding home.

On Thursday morning the fog began to clear in various ways. A telephone message from Three Ash came to say that a bearded tramp with thirty shillings on him had been found outside the village and was being held. Would somebody come over?

Cannan was the somebody, and glad of the chance.

First he crossed the ferry and gathered in Mr. Jupe, who was the only one who actually knew that Beaver *was* Beaver. Bearded tramps were probably as common as daisies in May. You had to make sure.

Mr. Jupe hitched his trousers and jumped at the chance of being, for the moment, important.

"I'd know him in a thousand," he said; adding generously: "I hope he gets five years. It will teach him to leave people's boats alone."

And when he saw Beaver in Three Ash police station he didn't hesitate a second.

"That's the fellow," he said. "That's the very man."

Beaver wanted to know what the game was; and when he found out what the game was, he got on his dignity.

"You couldn't prove anything against me," he declared.

They asked him where he got his money from.

"That," said Beaver, "is my business. It ain't against the law to have money, as long as it's honestly come by—and if you think this isn't, prove it—see?"

Yes, Cannan knew that was a snag. Paper money has numbers, but a sovereign looked like any other sovereign.

"If you have come by it honestly you can tell us how," said he.

"I'm not telling you," said Beaver, "*anything*. Things are for you to *prove*, if you can."

They tackled him about the theft of the boat, and began to find out that he wasn't as silly as he looked.

"Theft is stealing, isn't it?" said Beaver. "Well, I went from one side of the river to the other in it and that's all. I didn't damage it. I haven't kept it. You've got it back by now, I reckon. A schoolboy might do the same for a lark. What would you give him? Twenty years?"

"You'll have to come back with me," said Cannan.

So back they took Beaver. Cannan beginning to worry as to whether he could be held on a charge of boat-stealing.

Dr. Lydd was in the station when they got back, certifying a drunk. He looked interested and stopped to listen. When things had got a bit difficult, he took Cannan to one side.

"The trouble is," he said, "that Jupe can't identify the man."

"But he has!" protested Cannan.

"As the man he saw on the river bank, yes," agreed the doctor, "but not as the man who fought and knocked out Flagg. Nobody could do that but Flagg, and Flagg says he didn't see enough before he passed out. I tell you *what*—does Jupe identify the jacket he's wearing?"

So they called Jupe into the conference and he said yes, it was the same jacket Beaver had worn on the river bank.

"In which case," said Dr. Lydd, "this tramp did not shed the button we found on the floor at the Island House. Different kind of button, different kind of cloth. There's no red ink on him, either, though that's nothing to go by. The floor may have got the lot. But if that fingerprint on the wine glass is *his* fingerprint——"

"I'll try it," said Cannan. And tried it. And it *wasn't*.

"Another detail," said Dr. Lydd. "You'll remember that Flagg had landed a beautiful right on somebody's face. Well, it wasn't *this* fellow's face. There's not a bruise on it and hasn't been for ages."

Cannan began to feel bad tempered. "He's got thirty shillings on him and won't say how."

"Also," said the doctor, "he's got you on toast and knows it, and likes it. And I don't see what you're going to do about it. If you can *prove* the money came out of Flagg's cash register. . . . But can you?"

"If only he'd got a bust nose or a spot of red ink on him," sighed Cannan.

"Or different fingerprints," said Dr. Lydd, who seemed to be enjoying himself.

"We can't find out there was any other boat on the river at the time," said Cannan. "He was there and admits it. But he won't admit another thing. It *must* be Beaver. If only we hadn't found those clues!"

"Clues are clues," said the doctor.

"I know," Cannan nodded, and after thinking it over; "P'raps there were two of them?"

"Who's the other? And where?" the doctor asked.

"*Who*," said Cannan, "is the fellow with the finger-prints; but *where* is up another street. We shall have to start looking all over again. Is Flagg fit to see this man?"

Dr. Lydd thought he was.

So Flagg saw him. But Flagg only shook his head. He couldn't remember a thing about it, he said.

And though Cannan was sure that the tramp seemed relieved to learn this, back to the rolling highway went Beaver, with his hat perched on one side. Grinning.

(*please turn to page* 26)

Francis Foster as he was in 1925

FRANCIS FOSTER

who recently introduced you to Ananda, the extraordinary prophet, continues his autobiography, "Messengers of Mystery" with more strange stories, and recalls how——————

I INTRUDED ON A BLUE-EYED HERMIT

"If that gun is in the sahib's valise after to-morrow morning I shall put it through the porthole"

MOST people who write autobiographies crowd their pages with accounts of all the well-known personages they have met, yet it seems to me that well-known people are often much less interesting than others. Certainly that has been my experience; hence the people I prefer to write about are not those whose names you would recognise.

I have already described one—Ananda, the Indian mystic. I do not think there is anyone in this country, famous or otherwise, who has such a personality and such power as he. He reminds me of another man I met in Egypt in—I think—early 1920, not long after the "trouble" out there.

During the insurrection I was with my regiment in the desert and, our supplies being cut off, we had to live on horseflesh.

I spent much time alone, pondering on what Ananda had told me. This was not difficult to arrange, for I was appointed transport officer, and thus was detached from ordinary regimental work. Moreover, I did much horse riding alone. The reason was that, since but few of my fellow-officers were enthusiastic horsemen, I used to exercise most of their mounts. Indeed, I often spent as much as eight hours a day in the saddle.

The desert offered ample facilities. Its vast distances allured. To go right out of sight of camp and of all life, save the vultures, to halt on a sand-hill and survey that great shimmering emptiness, to lie in the hot sand and dream and try to understand the purpose of life—these things became, for the time being, all that I desired. Gaining boldness every day, I went farther and farther afield. When the wind was still, the great silence beat in my ears. I would try to imagine an empty universe—just silence.

Several miles from camp was a dump of dead horses and mules. Animals that the authorities had no further use for were taken out to this spot, slaughtered and their carcases left for wolves and jackals to pick; then when the bones were bleached they were removed, for these had a commercial value.

Just before a duststorm the wind always veered in the easterly direction in which the dump was, and the stench that came to us was such that we were in sheer misery. For there were hundreds of carcases out there in the desert, mouldering under the strong sun; the loathsome vultures and the few wolves and jackals which fed on this charnel ground could make but little impression on the plethora of dead flesh.

Several times I rode out to the dump—ostensibly to hunt wolves. Curiously enough, the smell was not so abominable—because it was not concentrated—when one was on the spot. But it was a ghastly place, for the animals had been skinned so soon as they were killed. I used to force myself to inspect the remains—I cannot tell you why. On one such occasion a newly-killed and newly-skinned horse kicked violently. Almost panic took possession of me. I thought that the poor brute was still alive—though skinned—and I drew my pistol, meaning to shoot it through the head. Then I realised that the kicking resulted from post-mortem muscular action.

How long did life take to leave a "dead" body? I wondered. Did it depart at once? And what was it that departed and yet left energy that caused the limbs to kick? I had seen this same muscular movement in men who had died in battle. I had seen chickens fly when their heads had been chopped off.

Cheerfully I slew vultures and jackals and wolves when I found them feeding in this awful place, yet my attitude towards these beasts was utterly unreasonable, and I knew it. I, too, ate dead meat, only before it stank—when I could. Every creature on earth was, I would reflect, the tomb of countless others; the very vegetation fed upon decaying vegetation.

Morbid thoughts, of course, but they were a necessary prelude to a better appreciation of life. I wondered how men could think of God as being the embodiment of love when He had ordained that His creatures prey on one another. I reflected that no love evidenced itself in nature.

In this method I hated the existing order of things. Pain and terror stalked the world, and God had ordained it. Was it possible that man—certain men, that is—was superior to God in that he could feel revolted by the cruelty in the lesser creation? Many people were vegetarians because they disliked the idea of destroying life in order to obtain food. Yet even vegetarianism was futile. Had not the Indian, Dr. Jagadis Chandra Bose, recently discovered that plants experience pain exactly the same as the animal creation do? To live, one was compelled to destroy.

Strange thoughts for a soldier!

Away beyond the horse-dump lay the Mokattam Hills, red-brown in the far distance. These were mysterious to us. None of us had ever been there; and I resolved to go.

ILLUSTRATED BY
L. G. ILLINGWORTH

One day, therefore, I started across the desert on my favourite mount, a waler, that was tireless if allowed to lope along in the Australian fashion.

Past the horse-dump I went on my waler, and, at last, sweating hard from the long ride in the intense heat, I came to the foothills. There I gave the horse a rest and a feed from the nosebag I had brought, and ate sandwiches myself.

When I stopped munching, and the horse too, no longer champed, I became aware of the intense silence. Apart from the noise of the wind, I reflected, no sound had ever broken the stillness of this place for thousands of years. The usual caravan route from Cairo to Suez was, I knew, many miles away.

And now I could hear a thin whisper of wind through the gully. The sun had passed its zenith; the wind grew; it made an organ sound that somehow seemed like the keynote of a harmony which sun and sand and red hills together formed.

The horse was becoming uneasy. His ears were well pricked forward; he was staring intently across a gully. Twice, as I watched, he tossed his head. I knew the signs well enough. The horse had sensed danger. At the most, I thought, it could be only a wolf. Yet the horse was used to wolves, for I had hunted them. Shielding my eyes, I stared across the gully. I saw white against the red of the hill.

It was a tomb. There are many such isolated white pillars dotted about the deserts of the east; they mark the burial places of Mohammedan saints and are often places of pilgrimage. Sometimes, too, one finds a hermit in such a spot. The tomb would not have worried the horse, I reflected; there must be a man there. Well, he was harmless enough, no doubt.

I took the horse's bridle and patting his neck reassuringly, began to lead him across the gully. He was well-trained, and though obviously still ill at ease, did not resist. As I drew near I saw that my surmise was right. The white column indeed marked a tomb, and sitting alongside it was a man in a brown robe. Though he must have observed me, he was staring, motionless, across the desert.

I had enough Arabic to be able to carry on a simple conversation. I gave the silent figure greeting, and, not wanting to seem to intrude, told him at once that I would not stay if I disturbed him. And then I had a shock. His face was dark brown under the cloth he wore turban-wise on his head, but his eyes were blue. He turned them on me.

"You are alone," he said in English, more in statement than in question, though a question was meant. The English startled me. Then his face creased into a smile. "How expressive you are!" he said. "Yes; I am English. What then?"

To cover my confusion I sat down, still holding my horse's bridle. But I need not have worried about the animal. He seemed quite at ease now. I knotted the bridle to shorten it, so that he would not catch a foreleg on it, and left him free, knowing that he would come to me so soon as I called. And all this I did in order to avoid talking. I hoped that the stranger would speak again first. He did.

"You have come from Belbeis?" he half-questioned, half-stated. "I saw you riding from that direction; and I know, of course, there are soldiers there."

"Yes," I said, and added: "You are sure you don't mind my disturbing you?" repeating what I had said at the start. It was an odd question to iterate, but I wanted him to know that I had no desire to intrude on his privacy. He was as much entitled to privacy there in those lonely hills as I would have been in my tent in camp—more so, in fact.

"No, I do not mind," he answered, in his precise fashion—as though it were a long time since he had used English and had forgotten how to abbreviate— "so long as you bring no one else here. I do not think you would do that."

"No," I said; "I wouldn't do that. Will you tell me why you are here?"

"Just to be alone," he answered, briefly.

Abashed I asked: "But how do you manage to live?—I mean, how do you get food?"

"There is a village over there." He pointed vaguely eastward. "They bring me food—or I fetch it."

Then silence fell between us. I looked to where he had been staring—across the tumbled sand to the south where the distant pyramids of Gizeh lay. I suppose that full fifteen minutes passed in this wise. The desire to speak, to question, left me. There was no sound but that organ note of the freshening wind and the "glint-glint" of metal as my horse nosed for vegetation and the rings of his snaffle-bit rubbed together. Above a hollow in the sand a mirage shimmered.

I wanted to stay their indefinitely, but the sun was now well west of south, and I might not tarry much longer. I had no mind to ride back so late that darkness would come before I had crossed the intervening desert. I forced myself to look at my silent companion.

"I must go," I said, softly.

"And you have asked no questions beyond the first few!" he answered. "Sir, you have the precious gift of being incurious."

"But I *am* curious," I answered, "only——."

"—only you respect privacy. You feel that my affairs are no concern of yours. Is that so? Well, then; you have achieved—unconsciously, no doubt—a wisdom that few gain. If you would achieve still greater wisdom quell all curiosity within you regarding other people; and never in any circumstances interfere in their lives."

"Suppose," I said, "I saw a man attacked by another. Should I not interfere?"

"You do not need to ask such questions," replied the hermit. "You know the answer already. When I spoke of interference I was referring to a man's private concerns."

"Suppose I saw a man trying to commit suicide?" I asked.

"His own voluntary act has nothing to do with you," was the answer. "You would be wrong to interfere. A would-be suicide is a victim of himself: you cannot judge whether he is right or wrong or what the consequences will be. You should leave him alone. It happens that you have instanced an extreme case. To my mind it is the supreme example of the necessity for not interfering. Every man's life is his own."

"British law does not think on those lines," I observed.

"What then? Is British law sacrosanct? In other countries—in many other countries—the law is different. Would you say that one law is more right in this respect than others? Conscience is above man-made law—and there is no other."

He stood up. He was tall and spare and handsomely built.

"I will answer your unspoken questions," he said. "I am a Coptic monk turned hermit. I left our desert monastery in order to live alone in these hills and meditate. You are the first Englishman to find me."

He held out his brown hand, English fashion. "Good-bye, my son," he said. "One day—years hence—you will understand. You are very young yet."

"Good-bye," I said, sadly.

The hermit silently touched his forehead and his breast and bowed. I called my horse. Then, mounting, I rode cautiously across the gully and down on to the plain. A mile or so away I stopped and turned in my saddle. The desolate hills showed no sign of life.

* * *

Less romantic than the Coptic hermit yet almost as interesting was an Englishman I met in Palestine, some two years earlier, during the war.

The regiment at that time was encamped at Dehr-el-Belah near the coast. I went once to the shore with the C.O. to bathe and thereafter wandered there alone almost every afternoon.

One evening when I went and lay among the sand dunes on the shore and gazed westward over the empty sea, thinking of England's greenness, I became aware that I was not alone. I looked round. A tall and gaunt soldier stood on a hummock and stared into the blue distance. That he was not conscious of my presence was obvious.

I must have moved, for he turned sideways and looked in my direction. Then he saluted and would have turned to go but there was such a look of disappointment on his face that I stayed him. At first he was truculent; a fellow-feeling told me that he had come for the same reason that I was there, and that he resented being disturbed, but presently he sat down alongside. I supposed that he was an R.A.M.C. man or a sapper, but I did not question him, and his sun helmet did not reveal his corps.

"It'll be lovely in England just now," I said, rather woodenly, after a long silence. "I wonder if they've had any late frosts this year."

It was a remark to kindle any countryman. His face lighted up.

"No doubt they have," he said, "for they always do have them. You bed out in the third week in May, but you're bound to lose some plants before June comes."

"When were you last home?" I asked him softly.

"I haven't been home at all since I came out at the end of '14," he answered. He was staring over the sea. "It's a long time."

And I had been East only a few months! I was ashamed of my nostalgia. To cover my confusion I asked him where his home was.

"I'm a Worcester man," he said, proudly.

"Tell me about your home," I said to him.

"My home, sir?" he answered, a little self-consciously. "What can I tell you about it? It's just home. It's in a valley among the Worcester hills."

I avoided looking at him, for I wanted him to go

(*please turn to page* 12)

on. I wanted him to picture a place—though not in Worcestershire—that troubled my own mind.

It is quite impossible for me to reproduce exactly what he said, and still more to invest the picture with the atmosphere with which his love for his home filled it; but he told me of the green fields of his own place in the hollow in the hills where he was born; of the cool river and deep lanes and humpy hills; of the square tower of the church and the low-roofed inn on the green. Sunset came and a hot wind blew across the desert, but still he went on talking and I did not stay him. He spoke foolishly of odd things—meadowsweet, eggs and bacon, and mushrooms, fresh-gathered on a September morn, of church bells sounding across water-meadows, market days and fussy local trains, bread and cheese and ale, delphiniums and flower-shows in high summer. . . .

And neither of us felt in the least self-conscious, for, you see, we two were alone in the growing darkness on a sand-dune in the desert, and we were both filled with longings for England.

I have often wished I could meet that man again. Alas! I expect he was killed in one of those final battles in which the Turks made their last stand against us as, led by Allenby, we swept the "infidels" from the Holy Land.

Allenby was the one famous man I met whose personality was outstanding. He believed implicitly that he was God-guided—that he had been divinely appointed to fulfil the ancient prophecy concerning Jerusalem. Maybe that is why much of his strategy—as he confessed—was based on the strategy of Joshua, who won the Holy Land for the Israelites. One of his battles was, in fact, an exact replica of one you can read about in the Old Testament.

I was in Palestine at the time of the capture of Jerusalem, and just after that event I heard a queer, ironical, old proverb of the Turks that not until the waters of the Nile flowed into Jerusalem would that city ever be wrested from them. It is odd that in 1917 the waters of the Nile did flow into the Holy City, for Nile water was pumped through a pipeline laid by the engineers, to supply the needs of the advancing troops.

I was much interested in Allenby's idea of his divinely appointed mission. It happened that at that time someone sent me a book entitled "Light for the Last Days" in which the author, Dr. Gratton Guinness, claimed to have discovered exactly what space of time a "day" meant in the prophecy of Daniel. Using the "key" supplied, I myself investigated that prophecy and found to my amazement that the recapture of Jerusalem was forecast for 1917!

While I was at Rafa I was informed, by a credible witness, that a mummy had been unearthed near Jerusalem. During the process of unwinding the cloths which bound it, the excavators were astonished to find that the cerements were becoming more and more coloured. Finally, they stopped in stupefaction for the patterns which the bindings made at this stage on the mummy were those of a perfect Union Jack in red, white and blue!

I was not in Palestine when the end came. In the summer of 1918, when I was in command of a detachment of troops guarding prisoners of war and lines of communication at Rafa, on the borders of Sinai and Palestine, I was stricken with dysentery. I am referring to this incident because it leads me in a natural way to introduce another real personality—my Indian servant, Durasingham. He was not a soldier—we were allowed, in the Indian Army, to take our personal servants on active service—yet he cheerfully bore privation and hardship and danger.

I was put to bed in the field hospital and on the third day was despatched, very ill indeed, to Egypt. I was very much worried about Durasingham, for I had had no time to make arrangements to have him sent back to India.

One day, about a fortnight later, as I lay dozing in a ward of Ras-el-tin Hospital at Alexandria and very ill indeed, I awoke to find someone kneeling by my bed. I was too weak to do more than feebly raise a hand, and I could see only an Indian's *pagri* (turban). I touched it. It was raised. Durasingham's tear-stained face looked at me in wonderment.

"I thinking master was dead," he whispered, in his quaint Madrassi English.

I could not talk. I was too weak. It was not till weeks later that I heard the full story. Apparently on the third day after I had gone to the field hospital at Rafa, Durasingham had paid his daily visit to me only to find me gone. All they knew at the hospital was that I was on a train bound for Egypt.

Durasingham had no money. He therefore packed his scanty belongings into a haversack, and with no more equipment than that, started to tramp across the desert of Sinai to Kantara. Perhaps I need not say that it was in this same desert that the Israelites were alleged to have wandered forty years before finding the Holy Land.

He reached Kantara eventually, and went to the base hospital. A ward orderly told him that I had been sent to Alexandria. Durasingham crossed the Suez Canal and trekked to Port Said. There he "jumped" a train, but it took him to Cairo. He tramped out of Cairo alongside the railroad to a local station and there "jumped" another and in due course arrived at Alexandria.

Now Alexandria in 1918 was full of military hospitals, so his task was far from being ended yet. But in due course he found me—at the third hospital he visited. No wonder he thought that I was dead. Certainly I was scarcely alive.

Durasingham remained my servant all the time I was in the East. He accompanied me, for instance, in 1920 when I was in charge of Turkish prisoners of war who were being repatriated to Turkey.

He was a humorist—though, maybe, unconsciously—as well as a very loyal man. The day before we returned from Constantinople he asked me for an advance of pay, saying that he had seen a cheap shot-gun he wanted to buy. I told him that it was impossible to import arms to Egypt—owing to a recent law passed after the insurrection there—but he assured me that he could manage it and that he would not involve me in any way. So I gave him what he wanted.

The first night at sea my subaltern and I shared a cabin—a separate cabin more fitting the dignity of O.C. ship (myself) would not be ready till the morrow. When I entered it, the subaltern was staring in consternation at his valise, which he had just opened on the floor. It contained a shot-gun.

"How the devil did that get there?" he demanded.

Association of ideas was not difficult. So this was Durasingham's method of importing a gun into Egypt! He had obviously thought that an officer's baggage would not be examined at Port Said.

I called to him. When he came I said: "Durasingham, if that gun is in the sahib's valise after tomorrow morning I shall put it through the porthole."

It was gone next morning, and I soon forgot all about it.

We docked at Port Said in due course, and I ordered all the troops on board to parade on the quay. The port authorities made a point of inspecting all new arrivals to the country—no doubt to prevent unwelcome people from landing (Egypt was still in a state of unrest) and the embarkation officer went round the ranks of the men with me.

The sepoys were drawn to attention with rifles at "the order." At the end of the rear rank stood my servant, Durasingham. Although not a soldier, he could easily—to a non-Indian Army officer, anyhow—pass as one, for he wore semi-military khaki clothes. And against his right side, held in military fashion, was a shot-gun!

I prayed fervently that the embarkation officer did not have an observant eye. Nor had he. Though a shot-gun does not bear much resemblance to a service rifle, no comment was made. What is more, when my second-in-command gave the order to "Slope Arms!" Durasingham somehow managed to bring his gun on to his shoulder without mishap, and he marched away with the troops as though he had been a soldier all his life!

One last picture of a ghost of those crowded years, and I am done. To paint it I must take you back to the end of 1918 when I was in hospital in Alexandria with dysentery. The first day I was allowed out was November 11th. I thought I would have a solitary lunch at the Hotel Majestic, and I entered the place before noon.

I do not know what time it was when I heard the news of the Armistice, but I remember that I was sitting in the lounge and feeling very weak. I heard a sudden groan. An officer was reading a notice pinned to the wall. He turned round. Tears were streaming down his cheeks.

"It's all over!" he croaked wildly. "Oh, God! it's all over!"

My heart stopped beating. I understood what he meant. All over! The war was ended!

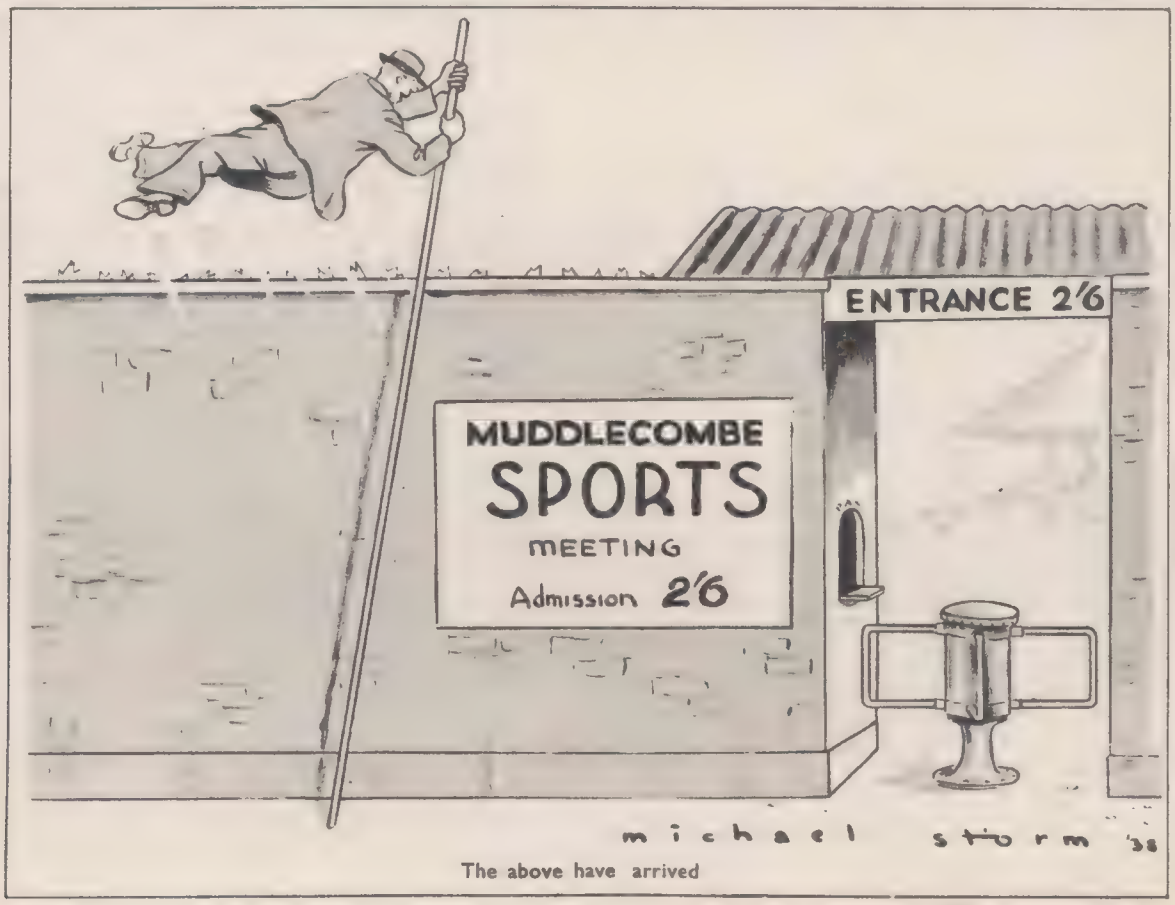
We both rose together. He linked his arm in mine. We went slowly into the dining-room and sat down in silence. The band blared. I do not know what we ate, though I remember that one course was caviare. We drank champagne. But we did not speak till the end. Then solemnly we drank Napoleon brandy—two glasses apiece.

We toasted each other with the first. With the second—well, I think we were both thinking of the past. Every friend of mine of the old days, with the exception of Mark Symons, the painter, was dead.

ANOTHER INSTALMENT WILL APPEAR IN A FORTNIGHT

TAKING THE RIGHT STEPS

"Frankie" Leyburn, popular hotel dance-hostess, slowly but surely follows the tracks of the American diamond thief, until finally, with the help of Inspector Pomeroy, she "lays him by the heels" and at the same time saves her friend from the dreaded charge of manslaughter! A tremendously thrilling yarn—"STONE WORK"—by FRANK KING, will appear next week.



The above have arrived

SHORT SHORT STORY COMPLETE ON THIS PAGE

WITCH WORDS

BY ANDREW W. ROBERTSON

ILLUSTRATED BY ERIC PARKER

Now the Doc appeared on the balcony and announced to the startled natives that he was going to will the witch-doctor to death

FREQUENTLY it fell to me, as part of my work, to meet incoming ships at the docks. This task was usually very pleasant in summer time. But in the winter it was quite another matter. It always seemed that our ships arrived on the coldest and foggiest days of the year. Also, it seemed that the worse the day was, the longer I had to wait.

Often I had to kill quite a lot of time in the dock waiting on the ships coming. Over a period of years I had visited every pub and cafe in the neighbourhood but since making the acquaintance of Alf Barton, the owner of a small stevedoring firm, these other places of waiting held no further attraction for me.

I began to look forward to killing time in his small, well-heated office. Here we would drink coffee over a roaring coal fire and Alf would start reminiscencing over some thing or other. To hear him talk you would think that Hamburg, Shanghai, Rio de Janeiro, Marseilles, Singapore and San Francisco were just like being suburbs.

Alf had a good memory and used to say about it, "I took no correspondence course in remembering, it's just plain natural."

It was certainly cold when I entered Alf's office and he was sitting with his feet on the mantel-piece.

"How are things with you?" he asked.

"Well, I'm afraid," I replied, "that there's nothing much doing in my business at the moment, but the only unusual thing I have seen was the Great Yoba, the Royal Illusionist, at a local variety theatre, performing a remarkable mind control act. He made various members of the audience do all kinds of things they didn't want to do."

This was Alf's cue to start talking about his experiences in Africa.

"About thirty years ago, I was doing some trading in West Africa," said Alf. "It's a rotten climate but I was making good money so I didn't mind the heat."

"The place I was in was fair sized, as these places go, and in this tin-shack town there was a white doctor—a medical doctor. He'd probably got struck off the medical register at home, but he was no quack. He was a proper inebriate. Inebriated the whole day, usually. But this didn't stop him from being good at doctoring. Most of the inhabitants swore by him and a few at him.

"His patients were not all whites. He used to treat the natives, too. And one fine day he was called on to treat one of the local tribal chiefs who had been given up as hopeless by the tribe's witch-doctor. Most of these witch-doctors are just as smart as our own doctors with their own diseases. Once I was treated for fever by one up-country. He gave me some foul concoction and then did a little dance and whatever he done I was soon rid of my fever.

"Well, this chief needed an operation of some sort or other, that's why the witch doctor gave him up. Well, the Doc took a great risk operating on the chief. If he'd failed, his life wouldn't be worth two pins. But the chief survived it and, when he recovered, he presented the doc with all kinds of things and began treating him as though he were a sort of god. With the chief doing all this, the rest of the tribe soon followed.

"Naturally, the doc didn't mind. All this was good for his surgical business. Even doctors have to look after their business just like the rest of us. His business got an awful fillip after that.

"Now with the white doctor curing the chief, this put his own witch-doctor in a bad light with the rest of the tribe. But the witch-doctor was not going to take it lying down. He wasn't going to let any white physician come and take away all his business.

"The witch-doctor decided that the place was not big enough for the two of them. One had to go. Either it was the white magic man, or him, the great witch-doctor. The witch-doctor had to do this, if he wanted to continue. He had lost professional face with his black patients and wanted to show the tribe who was the greater magic man.

"The next day the witch-doctor, who had some unpronouncible name, arrived in the little town with his two assistants. He was certainly a dandy in the primitive way, with his leopard skin and the skulls around his waist. He announced to all the blacks in the market place that he had come to kill the white doctor by incantations. The Africans being very superstitious and theatrical in their ways, were greatly interested in this and immediately afterwards one of his assistants began beating the tom-tom drum and a crowd soon collected. The witch-doctor liked having a crowd. With the crowd following him he marched right up to the front of the doctor's bungalow and announced to the people who followed that he was going to start willing the white doctor to death. He was going to curse him and make the hidden powers kill him. Immediately after that his assistant started pounding the drum. Then the witch-doctor started a long and sonorous mumbling. When he started this you could see the white of the eyes in plenty of the blacks around him.

"At first the white doctor ignored the row but curiosity got the better of him and he appeared on the verandah. He was greatly amused when told what the witch-doctor was up to. He didn't worry in the least about it. But went straight in and continued with his boozing.

"All through the night the witch-doctor stayed outside and at intervals kept mumbling out all kinds of things. But this didn't worry the white doctor, who always managed to sleep soundly, no matter what was up. Whether it was the drink, or drugs, I don't know.

"However, on waking, the doc was rather surprised to see the witch-doctor still there, seated under a shady palm tree. Well, the doctor just continued about his medical business as though there was nobody outside. When sun-down came many of the natives gathered to watch the witch-doctor.

"This annoyed the doctor, but he had a sense of humour and got a laugh out of it. So he begins to do some thinking and thinks, how about having a joke at the witch-doctor's expense? So after a drink he comes out on the verandah and says to the crowd that he's not going to let the witch-doctor have it all his own way. He'd decided to will the witch-doctor to death. This, of course, made a great impression on the crowd. They soon saw that it was going to be a battle between white man's magic and black man's magic.

"The news of what the doc was going to do soon spread through the town like the news of a fire. All the whites became interested in what the doc was going to do. And it seemed as if half the town had collected outside to see what the doc was going to do.

"When a big enough crowd had collected the witch-doctor just continued with his incantations and his song and dance as though the crowd wasn't there. Now the doc appeared on the balcony and announced to the startled natives in their own lingo that he was going to will the witch-doctor to death by white man's magic.

"With this the doc started reciting poetry with all kinds of dramatic gestures and in a very loud voice. I knew it was poetry, but Bert, my assistant, who was at night school once, told me that it was some of Shakespeare's works, but whatever it was it sounded all right. You know, after that, when I got home again I started attending some of his plays. Well, most of the whites began to smile at the poetry. Some of them must have been at the same school as Bert for they seemed to know whose poetry it was, too.

"For the next few hours he continued shouting out this man Shakespeare's poetry and making all kinds of faces when doing it. He stopped now and again for a few drinks. On the other side the witch-doctor spoke in his sonorous voice all kinds of things in the black's lingo. Maybe he was using the poetry of some black Shakespeare, but there was no one to enlighten me on this matter, but that's of no importance.

"With the doc doing this, the news spread all over the country and the whites, and probably the blacks, too, were gambling and taking bets on the winner. Even the government officials seemed interested in it from the prestige angle. The officials were more worried about the prestige than the bets.

"It seemed that the doc kept appearing on the balcony and shouting out that man Shakespeare's poetry every time the witch-doctor shouted his. Every day this went on.

"Now it seemed that the witch-doctor reckoned that the white's words were just as good as his, and knowing how important the dance is with the natives, he began doing a dance. Now this put the white doc in an awkward spot. For it seemed that Shakespeare didn't put no dancing in his plays. But this didn't stop the crafty doctor.

"He can't let the witch-doctor get away with it. So he calls on his Scotch friend, Murray MacDougall, and borrows a kilt and two swords as well as getting MacDougall to come along and play on the bagpipes. The doc then waits till sundown when a big crowd of natives have gathered, and then gets MacDougall to start playing on the bagpipes. Later on, out comes the doctor in a Scottish kilt and does what he thinks is a highland sword dance over the swords.

"This and the sound of the bagpipes startle the natives and probably the witch-doctor, but he doesn't show it. You hear both a native drum and the bagpipes going at the same time. An hour or so of this is enough for the doc and he looks as though the bagpipes were worrying him. So he returns to spouting the poetry.

"That night the doc don't trouble to get up every hour. Nor does the witch-doctor. When morning comes there is a buzz of talk, and my native boy comes running in and tells me that the witch-doctor was found dead under the palm tree. This news naturally created some stir and a great crowd had collected outside the white doc's bungalow, yelling for the winner. But they didn't mind being kept waiting and I waited, too.

"We all waited anxiously, knowing that the doc was not one to be hurried, when along comes MacDougal, and he said, 'It look's as though the doc's magic is best. So I'm going in to get him out."

"MacDougall entered and was out again in a few minutes looking rather glum. 'What's the matter, Mac?' said I.

"'Why, the doc is dead, too,' he replied."

BROTHER ORCHID

Little John Sarto, dethroned gang-leader, finds that the language of flowers can direct a man's destiny as surely as the chatter of a "tommy" gun

BY RICHARD CONNELL

ILLUSTRATED BY RONALD LAMPITT

"NOW, be smart," the warden said. "Go straight."

A grin creased the leather face of Little John Sarto.

"I *am* goin' straight," he said. "Straight to Chi."

"I wouldn't if I were you, Sarto."

"Why not? I owned that burg once. I'll own it again."

"Things have changed in ten years."

"But not me," said Little John. "I still got what it takes to be on top."

"You didn't stay there," the warden observed.

"I got framed," Sarto said. "Imagine shovin' me on the rock on a sissy income-tax rap!"

"It was the only charge they could make stick," the warden said. "You were always pretty slick, Sarto."

"I was and I am," said Little John.

The warden frowned. "Now look here, Sarto. When a man has done his time and I'm turning him loose, I'm supposed to give him some friendly advice. I do it, though I know that in most cases it's a farce. You'd think men who'd done a stretch here in Alcatraz ought to have a sneaking notion that crime does not pay; but while I'm preaching my little sermon I see a faraway look in their eyes and I know they're figuring out their next bank job or snatch."

"Don't class me with them small-time heisters and petty-larceny yeggs," said Little John. "I'm a born big shot."

"You're apt to die the same way," said the warden, dryly.

"That's okay, net, by me," said Little John. "When I peg out I want to go with fireworks, flowers and bands; but you'll have a beard to your knees before they get out the last extra on Little John Sarto. I got a lot of livin' to do first. I got to wash out the taste of slum with a lakeful of champagne, and it'll take half the blondes in the Loop to make me forget them nights in solitary. But most of all I got to be myself again, not just a number. For every order I've took here on the rock, I'm goin' to give two. I'm goin' to see guys shiver and jump when I speak. I've played mouse long enough. Watch me be a lion again."

The warden sighed. "Sarto," he said, "why don't you play it safe? Stay away from Chicago. Settle in some new part of the country. Go into business. You've got brains and a real gift for organization. You ran a big business once——"

"Million a month, net," put in Sarto.

"And you're only forty-six and full of health," the warden went on. "You can still make a fresh start."

"Using what for wampum?" asked Little John.

"You've got plenty salted away."

Sarto laughed a wry laugh.

"I got the ten bucks and the ticket back to Chi and this frowsy suit the prison gimme; and that's all I got," he said.

"Don't tell me you're broke!"

"Flat as a mat," said Little John. "I spent it like I made it—fast. A king's got to live like a king, ain't he? When I gave a dame flowers, it was always orchids. My free-chow bill ran to a grand a week. They called me a public enemy but they treated me like a year-round Santy Claws. . . . But I ain't worryin'. I was born broke. I got over it."

A prison guard came in to say that the launch was ready to take Sarto to the mainland.

"Well, good-bye, warden," said Sarto, jauntily. "If you ever get to Chi gimme a buzz. I'll throw a party for you."

"Wait a minute," said the warden. "I can't let you go till I make one last attempt to start you on the right track. I know a man who'll give you a job. He runs a big truck farm and——"

He stopped, for Sarto was shaking with hoarse laughter.

"Me a rube?" Little John got out. "Me a bodyguard to squashes? Warden, the stir-bugs has got you."

"It's a chance to make an honest living.

"Save it for some cluck that would feel right at home livin' with turnips," Sarto said. "I got other plans."

The siren on the launch gave an impatient belch.

"So long, warden," said Little John. "I won't be seein' you."

"You're right there," the warden said.

Sarto's face darkened at the words.

"Meanin' Chi might be bad for my health?"

"I've heard rumours to that effect," replied the warden.

"I've heard 'em for years," said Little John. "They're a lotta rat spit. Plenty guys has talked about what they was goin' to do to me. I always sent flowers to their funerals—you heard about that."

He chuckled.

"A big heart of forget-me-nots with 'Sorry, Pal' in white orchids on it."

"All right, wise guy," the warden said. "Go to Chicago. The sooner you get rubbed out the better for everybody. You're no good and you never will be."

"Atta clown," said Little John Sarto. "Always leave 'em laughin' when you say good-bye."

Laughing, he started out toward the big, grey gate.

Deep in the woods in an out-of-the-world corner of Michigan, squat, unkempt Twin Pine Inn hides itself. It was silent that summer night, and dark, save for a single window in the tap-room. Behind the customerless bar, Fat Dutchy was drinking his fourth rock-and-rye.

"Stick 'em up. This is a heist."

The voice, low and with a snarl in it, came from the doorway behind him. Up went Fat Dutchy's hands.

"Easy with the rod," he whimpered. "There ain't a sawbuck in the joint."

"Not like the good old days," the voice said.

Dutchy turned his head. Little John Sarto was standing there with nothing more lethal in his hand than a big cigar. Dutchy blinked and goggled.

"Well, grease ball, do I look funny?" Sarto demanded.

"No—no—boss, you ain't changed a bit."

"I don't change," Sarto said. "Gimme a slug of bourbon."

Fat Dutchy sloshed four fingers of whisky into a glass. His hand trembled. Liquor splashed on the bar.

"What you got the jits about?" asked Sarto.

"You gimme a turn comin' in like you was a ghost or sumpin'," said Fat Dutchy. He wiped sweat from his mottled jowls with the bar rag. Sarto gulped his drink.

"Business bad, eh?"

"It ain't even bad, boss. It just ain't."

"Cheer up, pig puss. You'll soon be scoffin' filly miggnons smothered with century notes," Sarto said. "I'm back."

Fat Dutchy rubbed his paunch and looked unhappily at the floor.

"Things is different," he said.

Sarto banged his glass down on the bar.

"If one more lug tells me that, I'll kick his gizzard out," he said. "Now, listen. I'm holin' up here till I get my bearin's. Soon as I get things set, I'm goin' to town. But first I gotta contact some of the boys."

Fat Dutchy played nervously with the bar rag.

"Gimme another slug," Sarto ordered. "I got a ten-year thirst."

Fat Dutchy poured out the drink. Again his shaking hands made him spill some of it.

"Here's to me," said Sarto and drank. "Now, listen: I want you to pass the office along to certain parties that I'm here and want to see 'em, pronto. For a starter, get in touch with Philly Powell, Ike Gelbert, Ouch O'Day, Willie the Knife, Benny Maletta, French Frank, Hop Latzo, Al Muller and that fresh kid that was so handy with a tommy gun——"

"Jack Buck?"

"Yeah. I may need a torpedo. When I fell out, he had the makin's of a good dropper. So get that phone workin', lard head—you know where they hang out."

"Sure," said Fat Dutchy. He held up his hand and ticked off names on his thick fingers.

"Ike Gelbert and Al Muller is in the jug doin' life jolts," he said. "Philly Powell and French Frank

was crossed out right at this bar. Ouch O'Day throwed an ing-bing and was took to the fit house; the G-boys filled Benny Maletta with slugs and sent Willie the Knife to the hot squat; I dunno just where Hop Latzo is but I've heard talk he's at the bottom of Lake Mich in a barrel of concrete. So outa that lot there's only Jack Buck left and I don't guess you wanna see him——"

"Why not?"

"He's growed up," said Fat Dutchy. "He's the loud noise now. What rackets there is, Jack Buck's got 'em in his pocket."

"I'll whittle him down to his right size," said Sarto.

"Jack's in strong. He's waitin' for you, boss, and he ain't foolin'. The boys tell me it's worth three G's to the guy that settles you."

Sarto snorted. "Only three grand!" he said, indignantly.

"That's serious sugar nowadays," said Fat Dutchy. "I'm tellin' you times is sour. Jack Buck has cornered the few grafts that still pay. He's got a mob of muzzlers that was in reform school when you was head man. You ain't nothin' to 'em but a name and a chance to earn three thousand fish."

Sarto sipped his drink. Lines of thought furrowed his face.

"I'll stay here till I figure out an angle," he announced.

"Boss," said Fat Dutchy, "I don't wanna speak outa turn, but wouldn't it be a smart play to take it on the lam for a while?"

"Where to?"

Fat Dutchy shrugged his stout shoulders.

"I suppose the Abbot was sucker enough to go to the coppers," said Brother Orchid

"I wouldn't know, boss," he said. "When the heat's on——"

"Yeah, I know," cut in Sarto. "You're cooked wherever you go."

"What are you goin' to do, boss?"

"I'm goin' to hit the sheets and dream up an out," said Little John.

Dog-tired though he was, he could not get to sleep. His mind yanked him away from dreams, back to prison, to the death-house, where men were lying in the dark, as he was, trying to sleep.

"They got the bulge on me, at that," he thought. "They *know* when they're goin' to get it."

He felt like a man reading his own obituary, complete but for two facts: where and when.

He knew he was safe where he was, but not for long. They'd comb all the known hide-outs. He tried to think of some friend he could trust to hide him. 'Name after name he considered and rejected. He had come to the ninety-sixth name and found no one he could count on when he fell asleep.

A light in his eyes and a voice in his ear jerked him awake.

A man was bending over him, smiling and saying: "Wake up, dear. You'll be late for school."

He was a huge, soft-looking young man with a jovial, freckled face. His suit was bottle-green and expensive. Sarto had never seen him before.

"Up, up, pet," he said and waved at Sarto a big, blue-black automatic.

A second man watched from the other side of the bed. He was younger and smaller than the first man and his flour-white face was perfectly blank. Sarto did not know him either.

Sarto sat up in bed.

"Listen, fellas," he said, "if I get a break you get five grand."

"Got it on you, darling?" asked the freckled man.

"Nope. But I can dig it up inside a week."

"Sorry. We do a strictly cash business," the freckled man said.

"I'll make it ten grand," said Little John. He addressed the pallid man. "Wadda you say, bud? Ten G's."

The freckled man chuckled.

"He'd say 'no' if he could say anything," he said. "He doesn't hear, either. His eyes are good, though. His name is Harold, but we call him Dummy."

Sarto held his naked, flabby body very stiff and straight.

"Do your stuff," he said.

Dummy took his hand from his pocket. There was a pistol in it. The freckled man brushed the gun aside.

"We don't want to give this charming place a bad name," he explained to Sarto. "For Dutchy's sake."

"So that fat rat tipped you," said Sarto.

"Yes," said the freckled man. "For a modest fee. Come along, baby."

They were speeding through open farm country. The speedometer hit seventy-five. Sarto closed his mouth and his eyes.

"Praying?" asked the freckled man.

"Naw!"

"Better start, toots."

"I know nuttin' can help me."

"That's right," said the freckled man, cheerfully. "Nothing but a miracle. But you might pray for your soul."

"Aw, go to hell."

They turned into a rutty, weed-grown road. As they bumped along through a tunnel of trees, suddenly, silently Little John Sarto began to pray.

"Listen! This is Little John Sarto of Chicago, Illinois, U.S.A. I know I got no right to ask any favours. I guess I got a bad rep up there. Well, I ain't goin' to try to lie away my record. Everything on the blotter is true. I don't claim I rate a break. All I say is I need one bad and I'll pay for it. I don't know how; but look me up in the big book. It ought to say that when I make a deal I never run out on it. If I'm talkin' out of turn, forget it. But I won't forget if——"

"Last stop. All out," sang out the freckled man. He halted the car by a thicket of thigh-high brush.

Sarto got out of the car. Dummy got out, too. He kept his gun against Little John's backbone.

"Good-bye, now," said the freckled man and lit a cigarette.

Dummy marched Sarto off the road and into the thicket. Abruptly, like a spotlight, the moon came out. Dummy spun Sarto around. Sarto could see his face. It held neither hate nor pity. Dummy raised his pistol. As he brought it up on a level with Sarto's forehead, the breeze whipped a straggling branch of a wild rosebush across the back of his hand, and the thorns cut a wet, red line. For part of a second, Dummy dropped his eyes to his bleeding hand, Sarto wheeled and dived into the underbrush. Dummy fired three quick shots. One missed. One raked across Sarto's skull. One seared his shoulder. He staggered, but kept plunging on. Dummy darted after him. Then the moon went out.

As Sarto floundered on he could hear Dummy crashing through the brush behind him. But Dummy could not hear his quarry. Dizzy and weak, the

(*please turn to page* 17)

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Reduced Bust - 8 in.
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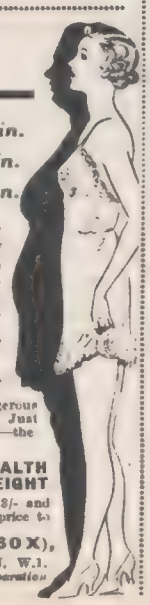

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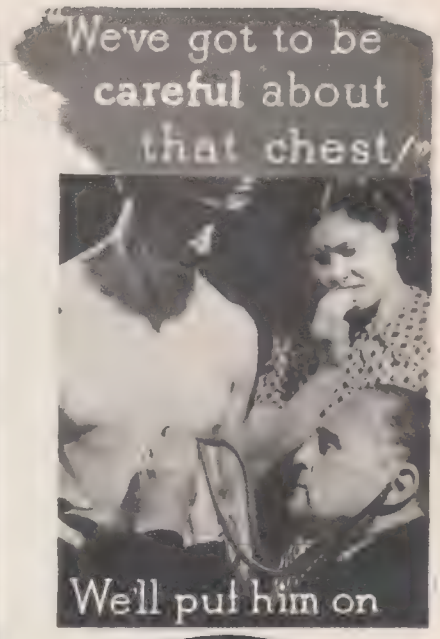

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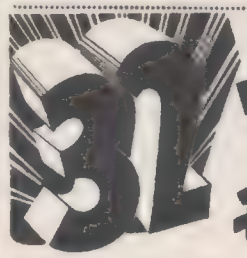

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wounded man fought his frantic way through tar-black brush. Thorns stabbed him, briers clawed. A low branch smashed him on the nose and he reeled and nearly went down. Bending double, he churned on.

Then his head hit something hard and he dropped, stunned for a moment. He reached out an unsteady hand and felt an ivy-covered wall. No sound of pursuit came to his ears.

Painfully he dragged himself up to the top of the wall. Not a sob of breath was left in him. He straddled the wall and clung to it. Then he fainted.

In the monastery of the Floratines, to-day was like yesterday and yesterday was like a day in the ninth century when the order was founded. Neither time nor war nor the hate of kings had changed their humble habits or their simple creed. Over the door this creed was carved: "Be poor in purse, pure in heart, kind in word and deed and beautify the lives of men with flowers."

These were the words of the Blessed Edric, their founder and, ever since his day, Floratines in every land had lived by them, harming no one, helping many, raising flowers.

When King Henry the VIII set his face against other monks he let no hostile hand be laid on the few Floratines.

"They do much good," the monarch said, "and, in sooth, they have nothing worth the taking, these Little Brothers of the Flowers."

They kept the name, and it gave rise to a custom. When a man left the world behind to enter their ranks, he left his name, too, and took the name of a flower.

In the first light of a new day they sat in their refectory, forty-four men in snuff-hued robes, most of them growing old. Their tonsured polls were brown from the sun, their faces serene from inner peace.

"Brother Geranium is late with the milk," observed Brother Tulip, eyeing his dry porridge.

"Perhaps the cow kicked him," suggested Brother Hollyhock.

"She wouldn't. She's fond of him," said Brother Nasturtium. "I'll go down to the dairy and see if anything has happened to him." But as he rose from his bench, Brother Geranium, popeyed and panting, burst into the room.

"There's a naked man lying in the petunia bed," he gasped out. "I think he's dead."

Little John Sarto thought he was dead, too, when he opened his eyes in the infirmary and saw Abbot Jonquil and Brother Nasturtium at his bedside.

"I made it," he exclaimed, huskily. "I beat the rap."

"Take it easy, son," said the abbot. "You've been badly hurt."

"But I ain't in hell," said Little John. Then he added, "Or if I am, what are you guys doing here?"

"You're alive and in a safe place."

Sarto stared at him.

"Say, do you know who I am?" he asked.

"No."

"You musta seen my mug in the papers."

"We don't see newspapers here," the abbot said. "And we don't ask who a man is if he needs help."

Sarto touched his bandaged head.

"How long am I in for?" he inquired.

"Until you are well and strong again."

"I got no money."

"Neither have we," said the abbot. "So that makes you one of us, doesn't it?"

"That's one for the book, mister," said Little John.

"I'm Abbot Jonquil. This is Brother Nasturtium, your nurse. If you wish us to notify your friends——"

"I got no friends," grunted Little John.

"You have now," said the abbot.

"I tell you I'm broke."

"You poor fellow," said the abbot, gently. "What a life you must have led!"

"I been round long enough to know you never get sumpin' for nuttin'."

"I think you have talked enough for the present," the abbot said. "Try to rest and try not to worry—about anything. You may stay here as long as you wish, as our guest."

He went to the door.

"I'll look in again this evening," the abbot said. "Meantime, if you need anything, tell Brother Nasturtium."

His sandals shuffled softly away down the stone corridor.

Sarto squinted at the bulky monk.

"Get me a slug of bourbon, Nasty," he said.

"If you don't mind, I'd rather be called Brother Nasturtium," said the other, mildly.

"Whatever you say, only gimme a snort."

Brother Nasturtium brought him a glass of water.

"Try it," he said. "'Twill give you strength."

"Water?" said Sarto, disdainfully.

"Look at lions and tigers," said Brother Nasturtium.

As he drank the water, Little John studied the man. He noted the dented nose, gnarled ears, lumpy knuckles and the jaw like an anvil.

"You was a fighter, wasn't you?" said Sarto.

"We don't ask questions like that," said Brother Nasturtium. "What we were, rich or poor, big or small, good or bad, does not matter here."

"That's double jake by me," said Little John. "I think I'm going to like it here."

"I hope so."

"Say, tell me sumpin', big boy. What's your graft?"

Brother Nasturtium's eyes twinkled.

"'Tis twenty years and more since I've heard such talk," he said. "We raise flowers and sell them in the city."

"There's good gelt in that," said Sarto. "You boys must be cuttin' up a nice profit."

"What we clear, and it isn't much, goes to the poor."

"That's a nutsy way to run a business," observed Little John.

He closed his eyes. Presently he said: "How does a guy join up with this outfit?"

"It's fairly easy," Brother Nasturtium told him, "if a man wants to be a lay brother——"

"A which?"

"Lay brother. I'm one. They don't take holy orders. They have few religious duties, chiefly saying their prayers. They are not permitted to go outside the walls, and they must obey their superiors. The discipline is rather severe. Some men say it's like being in prison——"

"They do, do they?" said Little John.

"Except that there are no bars."

"That might make a slight difference," conceded Little John. "What are the other catches?"

"Before a man can take his first vows as a lay brother, he must be on probation for a year. That means——"

"I know about probation," said Little John. "Where do I sign?"

"You'll have to talk to the abbot."

"Shoo him in."

"Lay brothers do not shoo abbots."

"Then tell him I wanta proposition him."

"If you're in earnest about this," Brother Nasturtium said, "you might be choosing the name we are to call you."

"Just call me 'Lucky'."

"It must be the name of a flower."

Little John thought a moment.

"I've picked up my new tag," he announced.

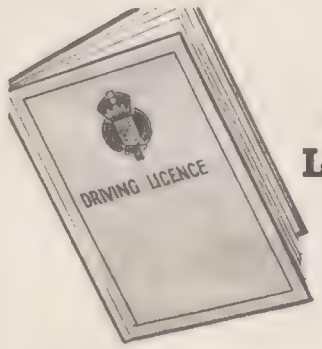
"What is it?"

"Brother Orchid."

At dusk Brother Nasturtium left the sickroom to get his patient's supper.

When he had gone, Little John began to laugh. It hurt him to laugh, but he couldn't help it.

"Boy, oh, boy!" he said. "What a hideout!"



A CLEAN LICENCE

Is certainly worth trying for, sighs Jimmy Kerns, the love-lorn taxicab driver, but he's not thinking only of his driving licence! You're going to enjoy this amusing yarn and the entertaining situation which finally leads Jimmy to "pop the question."

"HOPE THE MAN WINS"
by Max Brand
will appear in Next Week's issue!

As he weeded the rose garden Brother Orchid sang softly:

"Johnny saw Frankie a-coming,
Out the back door he did scoot,
Frankie took aim with her pistol,
And the gun went rooty-toot-toot,
He was her man——"

He turned the tune deftly into "Abide with Me" as he saw Brother Nasturtium come out of the greenhouse and head toward him.

Three nights before he had taken the vows that made him a full-fledged lay brother. The routine didn't bother him; he was used to one far more rigid; but he was not used to men like Abbot Jonquil, Brother Nasturtium and the rest. At first he felt sure that some sly, dark purpose lay behind their kindness to him. He watched, warily, for the trap. No trap was sprung. Always they were thoughtful, patient, pleasant with him and with one another.

"Maybe I've got into a high-class whacky-house," he thought.

Whatever it was, he decided, it was perfect for his plans. There he could bide his time, snug and safe, ready to strike. He was old enough to know the wonders time can work. And he was wise enough to know that while Jack Buck reigned as czar he must remain in exile. If he ventured back to his old kingdom now, he might just as well go straight to the morgue and book a slab. But czars slip, and czars fall, sometimes suddenly in this violent world. He'd wait and be ready.

"Well, Brother Orchid, your roses are doing well," said Brother Nasturtium, as he came up.

"Lay you three to one they bring more than your lilies," said Brother Orchid.

"It's a hundred to one they won't bring anything," said Brother Nasturtium, sombrely. Brother Orchid looked up and saw that the face, usually so benign, was grave.

"What's the gag?" he asked.

"Our market is gone."

"How come?"

"They won't handle our flowers."

"Who won't?"

"The wholesalers. We don't belong to the association."

"Why don't we join it?"

"They won't let us. Not a flower can be sold in the city that isn't grown in their own nurseries."

"I get it," said Brother Orchid. "The old chisel. Who's the wheels in this shakedown?"

"A man named Buck is behind it, I believe. So Abbot Jonquil learned when he was in town. He tried to see this Mr. Buck to plead with him not to take away our only means of livelihood. One of Buck's ruffians kicked him downstairs."

"I suppose the abbot was sucker enough to go to the coppers," said Brother Orchid.

"He did go to the police."

"What did *they* do—slug him?"

"No. They were polite enough. But they said that, so far as they knew, the Floral Protective Association was a legitimate business concern."

"The bulls still know the answers," said Brother Orchid. "And the D. A. said he'd like to do sumpin', but his hands is tied, because you gotta have evidence and all the witnesses is scared to talk."

"You seem to know all about it."

"I seen movies," said Brother Orchid.

He weeded away, deep in thought.

"Have we got any jack in the old sock?" he asked, suddenly.

"About four hundred dollars, the abbot told me."

"Peanuts," said Brother Orchid. "But enough for a couple of second-hand choppers. You and me could handle 'em. We'd need roscoes for the rest of the boys. But I know an armoury that's a soft touch. You and me and Geranium and Lilac could charge out to-night, hustle a hot short and knock it off. Once we was heeled we could move in on Buck and his gorillas and——"

"Man alive, what sort of talk is that?" demanded the scandalised Brother Nasturtium.

"Forget it, pal," said Brother Orchid. "I guess this sun has made me slap-happy. What are we goin' to do?"

"Be patient and pray."

"And eat what?"

"Heaven knows."

"Yeah, and they claim it helps guys that help themselves."

"Maybe Mr. Buck will see the light."

Brother Orchid plucked up a clump of sour grass.

"Maybe this weed'll turn into an American Beauty," he said.

(*please turn to page* 26)

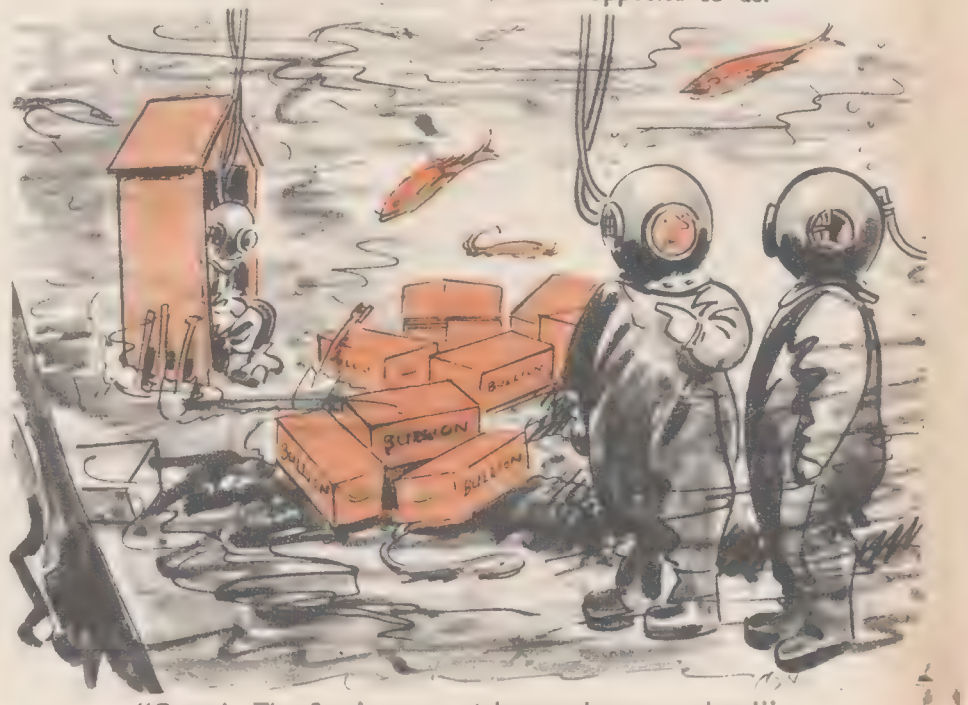
Laugh

The "PASSING SHOW

"Bert's a great help on washdays!"

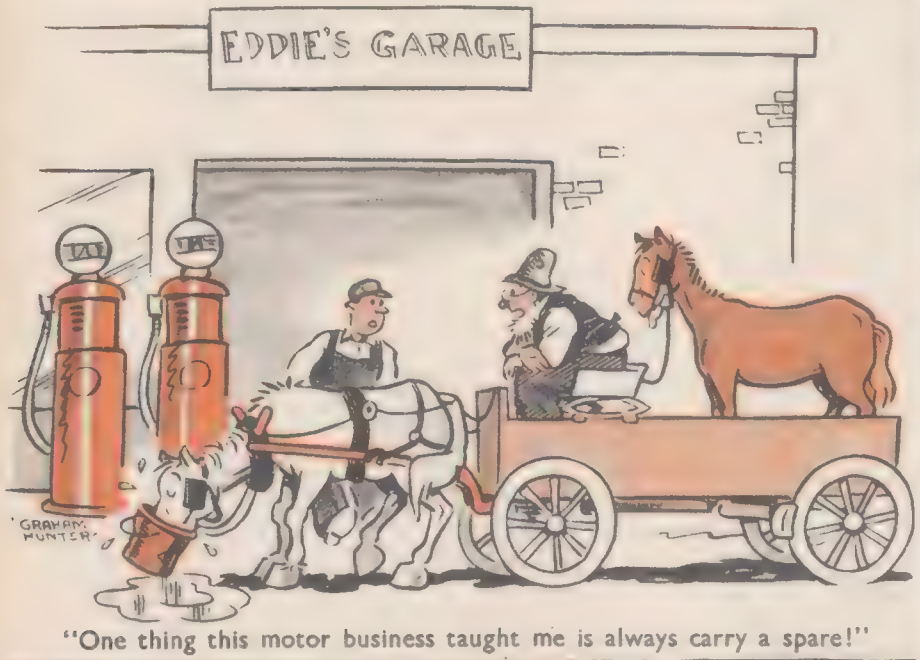
"There must be some mistake, madam. The 'seven day cruise' liner was berthed in the dock opposite to us."

"When I promised to look after his pets while he was away, I didn't know he ran a circus!"



"Curse! The firm's got a night watchman on duty!"

...kter
...ow" Smile Section



"One thing this motor business taught me is always carry a spare!"

"Force of habit, old boy. They've just come out of the army!"

"I've bought him pounds to save this one!"

Evolution !

A MAN AND HIS LUCK

By A. C. BARRETT

GOING UP?

CAMEODE
BY SHOWELL STYLES

Forewarning

It should be clearly understood that, of the Climbing brotherhood, few can give any lucid sort of reason for their airy sport. Yet mountaineers of either sex insist on trying to break their necks on every peak and pass from Ealing to Switzerland and far Darjeeling.

On one thing all of them agree ; though it might seem to you and me a risky thing to base one's hope of life upon a half-inch rope, they all assert in tones persistent that risk is nearly non-existent.

Bearing these curious facts in mind, let us at once proceed to find what things are needful when we start to learn the noble climbing art.

Equipment

The rope, say certain schools of thought, is "moral only" in support. But should the party fall, the rope affords them some (immoral) hope. So see that it is very strong. One hundred feet is not too long.

Boots must be chosen with great care, and nailed all over everywhere. The nailing may be deemed complete when one can scarcely lift the feet.

An ice-axe, as one may deduce, attains on ice its greatest use, though sometimes taking minor roles like setting spuds or cracking coals.

As for the coat, most pre-war tweeds will satisfy all fashion's needs. Breeches, well-cut and badly ripped—and lo ! the climber is equipped.

Climbing Methods. A Short Lesson

Taking our rope, our boots, our bags, let us approach some easy crags and—always with the greatest care—see if they get us anywhere.

The leader ties on at one end using a boilermaker's bend; the second uses, if he can, the kind of knot called middleman; the third man, loaded up with ropes, cameras, food and telescopes, must have the best knot we can find, for *he* must not be dropped behind !

The leader mounts, and finds a "stance." Now must the second man advance, and then the third. One at a time we struggle up the arduous climb. What could be safer? What, indeed ! Unless it's racing cars at speed—But hark ! A sudden wild alarm. The leader falls and breaks his arm.

Most careless. Take the fool away. That ends our lesson for to-day.

Food

One feature of the Alpine day is numerous breakfasts on the way; two lunches, then, or maybe three. But no one seems to care for tea. Diet experiment is risky. Take any kind of food, and whisky.

(Or, as some mountaineers find good, whisky and any kind of food.)

Upon the larger Alpine peaks a party may be stuck for weeks. A spare supply of food is handy. Take rum or gin, or even brandy.

Geology

Since rocks are numerous in kind, the ardent climber should not mind turning a little concentration upon their nature and formation. In fact, among the mountaineers, a stranger very often hears a group of hot and thirsty sports absorbedly discussing quarts.

Some Climbing Centres

1. *The British Isles.*

According to scriptural tales the prophet Jonah climbed in whales; no doubt his watery technique makes for better climbing in the Lakes.

The mountains in the Isle of Skye are cool in spring and seldom dry; the rock is chiefly Gabbro, which is most detrimental to the breeches.

2. *Europe.*

The Swiss are not so raucous as the natives of the Caucasus, because, you see, the latter have the boisterous manners of the Slav.

The novice on a lofty Alp may feel a tingling of the scalp; but this is not, as some declare, due to the rareness of the hair.

3. *The Himalaya.*

The climber in the Himalaya should shun the Lamas when at prayer. If interfered with, they might kick him across the frontier into Sikkim.

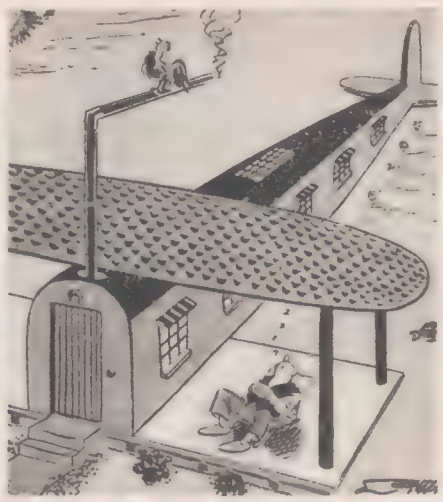
The slightest inadvertent push upon a peak in Hindu Kush may cause the mountaineer to fall upon a glacier in Nepal.

4. *The Home Counties.*

Although your foot may never rest upon the top of Everest, why not support home heights instead, and take the train to Leatherhead? For there the rhododendron grows as in Darjeeling 'neath the snows; and one may steal a secret thrill—with rope and ice-axe on Box Hill !

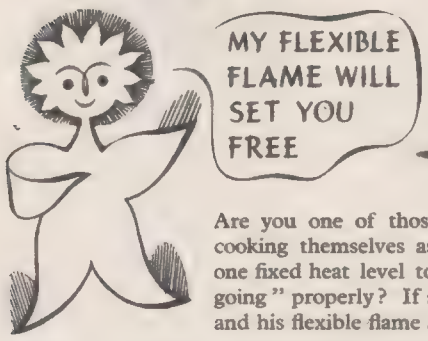
"most detrimental to the breeches"

"I have always said that the new engine driver takes the curves too quickly."
Schwiezer Illustrierte, Zurich.



The aeroplane designer builds himself a house
Smiths Weekly, Sydney.

Are you a slave to your Cooker?



Are you one of those women who slave for hours on end—cooking themselves as well as the meals—switching about from one fixed heat level to another in their anxiety to keep "things going" properly? If so, switch over ***without delay*** to Mr. Therm and his flexible flame and leave the cooking to look after itself!

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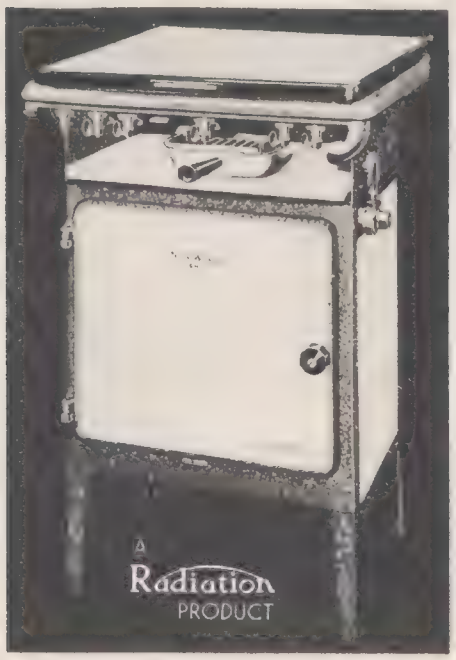
"Don't be a slave to your cooker," says Mr. Therm, "let my flexible flame set you free!"



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THE DEVIL COMES ABOARD

BY DOUGLAS NEWTON

ILLUSTRATED BY A. C. MICHAEL

SAVARAN left Kjweli in pomp and honour. His escape was not discovered until the changing of the *kasbah* guard, somewhere about 2 a.m. From that moment, the city was in an uproar. Men scuttled all ways, crying that Shaitan's most deadly ally was free. Gates were double guarded. Files of *dogari* hunted the alleys and stews. A thousand citizens, eager to earn the big reward fear had made the Kadi Jilbis el Sifr offer, combed every likely and unlikely nook for him.

They found no sign of the ragged adventurer. Even when he passed well under their very noses they merely gave him a respectful salute.

He was in the fifth of the array of coffins borne solemnly through the city from the coffin-maker's to the steamship *Allah-Din*. As none gave a thought to the coffin-maker's yard, because it was far too close to the *kasbah* for criminal tastes, because it was so open that anyone could walk into it or out, and because it was a holy place, dreaded by the superstitious natives, so no one thought of the coffins.

Indeed, the strong *dogari* guard drawn up on the quay to protect the Kadi and to catch Savaran, should he care to come that way, presented arms to him when he did. The scallywag seamen of the *Allah-Din*, warned to have their knives ready to slaughter him on sight, manoeuvred him reverently as the derrick slung him to his resting place on the after well deck. It was a glorious exhibition. Savaran, following it all through the lavish knot holes of his coffin, felt that the city had paid him a worthy tribute.

The crew of the *Allah-Din* were even more solicitous. Their mongrel tropic blood had to the full the ancient nautical distaste of corpses. Having set the cargo of coffins in a neat row on the deck, they took care to avoid them. So Savaran spent quite a restful first day at sea, for his coffin, in addition to being well-aired, was roomy enough not to be too restricting. Only when night came on with a brisk wind that both chilled him and bumped the ship, did he begin to suffer in spirit and body. The latter was the more eloquent. That other Napoleon had declared that victory depended on the fighter's stomach, and Savaran had not eaten for the best part of two days.

With darkness he accomplished his release. It was not hard. The friendly coffin-maker had provided him both with tools and the secrets of his crazy craftsmanship. Savaran hinged the head out of his casket and stood free on a black and deserted deck. His sense of generalship carried him first on a complete survey of the vessel, his instinct accommodating his lean figure to every shadow as he explored.

He found the *Allah-Din* to be a wheezy and decrepit old tramp of the type condemned by every reputable marine board, and only fit for the fatalistic type of owner-skipper who has dropped so low that all that is left to him is to wander like a nautical rag-and-bone man, looking for chance cargoes among the ports no good ship visits.

Some liar, or perhaps the lack of any reputable ship calling at Kjweli, must have brought Miriam Paston and her companions aboard this sea-hearse, in which even the coffins for Mecca had been shipped at their peril, and even the mummies in them were in for the beast of a voyage, for in the strengthening wind the wretched tub kicked, cracked and groaned in every joint, while her six-knot wallow was reduced to a wheezy pug's crawl.

The tramp had other evils. The lean adventurer's nose took him unerringly to the crews' galley. But all he found there was the stench of former meals. So bare was the place that it was plain that the master cut rations to the bone, keeping his food stored in the officers' quarters for fear of the hungry crew rushing the galley. That might have warned Savaran of complications ahead, had not his stomach clamoured too loudly for caution.

He fluttered, a shadow among shadows, along the greasy, buckling deck. Only twice did he pause, both times at the lit portholes of deck cabins. Through the first he saw the Kadi Jilbis el Sifr squatting, bulbous and unseemly, on his bunk. With him was a stubble-chinned, crook-eyed man, whose cooked-liver skin proclaimed the blood of many nations and greasy uniform and cap indicated the ship's captaincy. This creature listened while El Sifr laid down the law, and Savaran had only to note the cringing fear in his face to realise just

SAVARAN, that lean, eagle-eyed adventurer, the Whip of Kings and the Fear of Rogues, has come to Kjweli, disguised as a beggar, to settle an old account with the magistrate,

KADI JILBIS EL SIFR, merchant in money, intrigue, arms, slaves, drugs and such assorted dirt. He nears the magistrate's house just in time to rescue from a mob of natives

MIRIAM PASTON, a beautiful, courageous English girl; her brother,

TERRY PASTON, young, public school and very innocent of the ways of rogues, and their friend and fellow-traveller,

CAPTAIN EUAN AMORY. The three of them are in Kjweli to fit out an expedition to the hinterland. Savaran pursues one of the natives to recover Miriam's stolen bag and finds in it a map revealing the route of the expedition. He makes his way back to El Sifr's house to restore the bag but the magistrate is prepared and has him arrested and flung in gaol. Learning that the girl and her companions are sailing the next morning, Savaran successfully contrives to escape and board the ship by hiding in a coffin, one of a consignment that is being transported on the same boat

The display of weapons, however, cowed the weedy and cowardly crew, even if hate deepened in their eyes, and this fear the Kadi el Sifr drove home

how healthy was the position of the too trusting whites.

At the second porthole he was inclined to linger. Miriam Paston was beyond it, reading in her bunk. The tropic heat that kept her awake had also cut down her covering to the flimsiest of silk pyjamas. For a moment his expert appreciation of beauty at its best almost persuaded him that this was his moment for persuading her of the treachery of El Sifr and the chivalric magnificence of himself. But being above all a realist, food bulked more important than love, at the moment. Also, he heard a deck-hand approaching and to avoid troublesome explanations he beat a masterly retreat.

There was another such fellow who would lurk out of the wind by the companion door—until Savaran remembered the coffins and let out a couple of grave-yard groans that sent the fellow off to more companionable quarters. Between decks all went well. Though Savaran found that the officers' galley was also locked, the coffin-maker's chisel made short work of the bolt. Inside no more than the next day's rations were laid out on the shelves, so that as he ate from the officers' portion, he searched for and found the trap-door of the lazaretto, bent on collecting a fuller supply, or even, perhaps, taking up lodgings there, to be sure of plenty.

Fate and famine altered his plans. The largest and hungriest kind of negro fireman was also on the prowl for food. A desire as immense as his muscles had robbed him of all fear, and he too meant to find satisfaction in the officers' pantry—or murder. His methods were so workmanlike that Savaran had only just time to switch off the light before the warring appetites were clashing in the dark.

Experience had taught the negro that strength like his needed no advertisement. He just reached out with hands like hams directly he felt contact with a foreign body. Gripping well and truly, he began to exert muscles like a baby elephant's in an effort to crack the spidery man's spine. Savaran who knew strength when it fractured, released his now well-rehearsed coffin groan and went slack within the monster grasp.

The big buck, sure that body power had conquered, and his spine chilled by that groan, relaxed.... At once a ten-legged spider, each leg steel, wrapped itself about him. His feet were jerked from under him, snake-like filaments gripped his throat and gouged his eyes. He opened his mouth to shout, an elbow (or was it a knee) like a piece of angle iron rammed his front teeth down his throat. He tried to roll clear and scramble for the door. The Thing kicked him in the back of the neck and drove him on to his face. Then it leaped a mile into the air and came down on his loins with the impact of a cliff fall. At the same time the rest of the world crashed on to the back of his skull, and the negro went out. The last was the butt of a heavy coffee pot that Savaran's hand had encountered in the mêlée.

With a stunned man on his hands, Savaran had to change his mind. He gave the negro the use of the lazaretto instead, tying him up and tucking him comfortably behind some sacks of potatoes. Then, having made a master's selection of foods, he returned to his coffin to sleep, though on the way he gave a group of the deck watch the benefit of a few more sepulchral groans. From their reactions he judged that the voyage should be considerably enlivened.

The white passengers, at least, knew nothing of Savaran's efforts to increase the amenities of the voyage when they summoned the Kadi el Sifr to conference in the tramp's saloon. They were wallowing steadily up the coast, which their captain seemed scared to lose sight of in the strengthening breeze; and that coast, inhospitable always, was now growing flat and sandy. It was the sight of so much sand that made Miriam Paston feel that they should discuss their project more fully with their adviser.

"But don't tell him everything," Captain Euan Amory warned.

"Darn it, we've got to take the chap into our confidence," Terry Paston blurted. "We depend on him for a good send-off from Bamikano."

"I mean, not more than necessary—for instance, that I purposely drew the point 'x' in the wrong place on the map we showed him."

"Yes, we must still keep the true directions dark," Miriam nodded. "You've substituted the false map for the right one in the captain's safe, I hope, Euan, and have the original well hidden."

"On my body, my dear. Trust me not to part with it."

"You're afraid the friend Sifr might suspect that it's oodles of gold we're really after," Terry said, "and that he might do the dirty on us? As a matter of fact I've a feeling he's already thinking along those lines, but not necessarily lethally."

"Terry, don't be so young," Miriam cried. "If you go blurting out things like that in a place like this, he will. I think he's quite honest—I like his face, and his kindness. I'm quite sure he thinks we're only explorers, it's a thing the mad English do. Still, we can't be too careful. If a whisper of the gold got out to the crew . . ."

"There'd be the devil to pay," Terry grinned. "They're a pretty scavenging lot. I saw a batch just now, by the captain's cabin, a thoroughly shifty bunch of mongrels, who'd stab their mothers for a groat. . . . Oh, all right, I'll be dumb as an owl—let's call in Brother Sifr and get it over."

When the Kadi arrived he seemed oddly unsettled. His eyes were inclined to stray toward the door and his hands pluck nervously inside his robe, where they caught sight of a gold-hilted dagger and something very like the butt of an automatic pistol. Yet his attention was as smooth as oil while Miriam spoke.

"We've already told you how we found the map and the story of a city hidden in the middle of the Great Sand, among my great-grandfather's papers," she said. "He was one of the first administrators and explorers of that part of Africa, and it was his absolute belief in this city of Myssr, as he called it, that is the reason for our expedition. For though he made two or three attempts to find it, his failure was mainly due to the fact that the Great Sand is, as you know, made up of an unbroken succession of high sand dunes stretching for hundreds of miles in every direction. This, no less than an entire lack of wells and water, made and still makes, the venture impossible for even the largest and best organised camel caravan."

"It is a difficulty I have felt myself, since you gave me the honour of your gracious confidences," the Kadi murmured. "I cannot even now see camels——"

"Yes, to them the sand-hills are still impassable," the girl smiled. "On the other hand, there are certain modern methods that make it much more feasible."

"Ah—the aeroplanes!" the Kadi beamed.

"No earthly," Terry jerked in. "It's all sand-hills, man. Hundreds of miles of whacking big dunes with only narrow gulleys in between. No chance of landing; less of taking off."

"So—then you must forgive the dull brain of a backward native, what else could surmount such obstacles."

"Motor cars," Euan Amory put in. "Some years ago a Prince Kemal el Din opened up a new phase of desert exploration by using a fleet of caterpillar cars, and since then there have been a number of experiments in the Sudanese, Libyan and other deserts. These have demonstrated that light lorries, suitably equipped, can quite successfully overcome the hitherto insurmountable sand dunes as well as the other difficulties. We've studied what has been done, and—well, we have with us on this ship just such lorries and equipment."

"You startle me!" cried El Sifr, who, thanks to his hold over the captain, was already aware of all they

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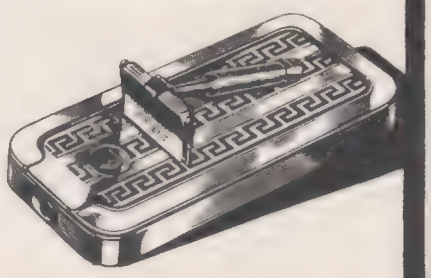

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carried on the *Allah-Din*, down to the last petrol tin.

"You must overlook our being silent about this," Miriam's smile would have melted a gun-man. "Though I know you'll agree that it was wiser to keep these details to ourselves."

"Most largely wise," the fat Kadi smirked. "As the Prophet says, 'Prudence is the Pearl of Wisdom,' Kjweli, too, was no place for light chatter."

"Because of such men as—as Savaran?"

"Him," the Kadi seemed uneasy, "and others."

"Yet now we are safe, we can complete the confidence we feel in you."

"It is a trust I will value with my life," El Sifr said unctuously and sniggered in his heart at their fatuous innocence.

"To get down to facts," Euan Amory said. "It means we won't need you to hire camels and so forth at Bamikana, as we let you think. We are actually fully equipped down to a full petrol supply and spare parts. But you mustn't feel you will suffer. . . ."

"That is not to be mentioned. My humble efforts to serve so noble and beauteous a female is reward enough," the Kadi said, superbly.

He could afford to make gestures. He was feeling thoroughly pleased with the situation. He, as Savaran had guessed, had gathered from their attempts at caution that not exploration but something of great magnitude was behind this adventure. To a mind like his that could only mean treasure. This careful, efficient *and* expensive outfit of desert-conquering lorries, was clinching proof of it. The point marked "x" on the map, this lost city of Myssr, concealed a fortune, he was sure. How right he had been to take the plundering of these foolish infidels in hand himself.

"We shall, of course, need supplies for the trip," Euan Amory went on. "Water for the whole journey, and perishable foods to see us over the first stages. Servants, too, and—shall we need armed guards, do you think?"

"But most certainly!" cried the Kadi with unction. "There is much powder on the road (brigandage) from Bamikano to Yriate and even to the edge of the Great Sand. But never fear, I will see that you have strong *el mzarog* (protection of the lance; escort.) I myself will choose your *askari*, and they will be answerable to me for your safety with their blood. I, Jilbis el Sifr, say it."

He beamed with the richest good will. He had already decided on the company of cut-throats he would send with them.

"But once we reach the Great Sand we will not need them, we can send them back?" Miriam said, anxiously.

"Oh, most certainly," the Kadi nodded in fatherly fashion. It amused him to see the innocent way she betrayed her desire to hide their real objective . . . gold, of course. And anyhow, the edge of the Great Sand suited him. Its desolate loneliness made their complete disappearance so easy—except, perhaps that he might take the girl with him on *his* expedition to Myssr—she was so comely, and he could always sell her to a rich Wali later.

"So, it is all settled," he smirked. "You are now entirely in the hands of Jilbis el Sifr, and thus have no more to worry you and nothing to fear."

As he spoke there arose mob noises from the deck, even cries of panic. The Kadi with quite astonishing nimbleness was on his feet and facing the companion stair leading to the deck; also, a pistol appeared, startlingly, in his hands. A moment later the whole crew came clattering down the brass-bound steps, their own captain leading them by a neck.

"It is true!" he screamed at El Sifr. "My ship is haunted. There is, veritably a ghost aboard."

"Not a ghost," a man yelled, "a Jinni!"

"Nay, Shaitan himself," a fanatic-eyed half-caste bawled. "I, Hamsi, can swear it—I *saw* him!"

Turmoil had burst like a bomb in the close air of the saloon. Euan Amory pushed Miriam Paston into an alcove by a table, and he and Terry stood guard before her. Although he knew something of African dialects, he had but a confused idea of what was happening.

"It is true, Excellency," the captain mouthed, from shaking lips. "Did I not show you the evidence myself. The burst

At the second porthole Savaran was inclined to linger

stewards' pantry, the coffee pot crumpled by no human hand?"

"*Subhan Allah*—ghosts do not break into pantries, nor devils play with coffee-pots," El Sifr cried. "It was a hungry man——"

"You forget Mustapha, the stoker."

"He is more likely your ghost," the Kadi sneered.

"But he vanished from the ship."

"Into a corner where he could glut his belly unseen."

"No—because he has been found," the captain screeched. "He who was stronger than three human men, has been found stunned and tied and tossed into the lazaretto by a devil in giant shape."

"An excuse to cover his greed."

"Nay, Mustapha himself swears to the devil. He was attacked in the dark by a monster larger than a mountain, who yet melted right out of his hands as he grasped him. Then the fiend floated behind him, wrapped his body in limbs of burning fire and, calling on seven other devils, crashed on his skull great boulders from Eblis."

"The limbs of Shaitan himself," the mad-eyed Hamsi yelped. "Don't I know? Did I not see the arch-fiend in person with my own eyes—his devil's face lit by the light from this white *bibi's* porthole?"

"You saw—what did you see?" the Kadi demanded, hoarsely.

"Shaitan!" Hamsi cried. "Shaitan twice as tall as a human man, and thin, as only one who's flesh had been shrivelled by hell's fires could be. Aye, and for all that melting into his native darkness as no human flesh could when he heard me call on the protection of Allah. I saw the fiend plain, on his way to rendezvous with his own accursed infidel woman."

The wild-eyed Hamsi flung a look of venom and terror towards Miriam Paston while the snarls of his companions were so plainly in agreement with him, that Euan Amory slipped his hand to his pistol butt and prepared to fight.

The Kadi el Sifr quickened with a fear that was not at all the same as Hamsi's, demanded savagely:

"Can you describe the face of this scarecrow devil of yours, who also burst into a pantry to eat human food?"

"It torments my eyes still," Hamsi mouthed. "Horns sprouting from his head, smoke gushing from his mouth and even his eyes," he squirmed under El Sifr's ugly oath. "Excellency, I swear by the Stone that I saw what I saw. It was the face of Lucifer himself, as fierce and dark as a vulture's, with teeth as white as a wolf's as he smiled on his she-devil."

"It might have been a man—a stowaway," Jilbis el Sifr's growing suspicion had culminated in a sickening nausea. There was only one man with a face like that, only one man who could strike terror like that. Only Savaran, of all men, would have the audacity to hide himself in his enemy's pocket, as it were, after escaping from the *kasbah*. Yet how with all those guards. . . .?

"But, Excellency," the captain was saying. "Have we not searched the ship from keel to deck-boats? Not a square inch has been left unsearched—and yet there is no sign of a man."

"There is no man," Hamsi screamed. "It is a devil this white woman has brought aboard with her."

There were ugly growls, the beginning of a movement which El Sifr checked with a sudden gesture. He had remembered the coffin-maker's yard under the *kasbah* wall.

"Not a devil," he said slowly. "No, nor Shaitan. What you tell reveals this woeful thing to me. It is not the fiend himself but one I knew well in Kjweli, a base wretch who had traffic with the Parent of all Evil. He died two moons ago and while in the terror of death

ordered that his body should be shipped to Mecca, hoping that a burial in Holy Ground would enable him to escape his just punishment. Yes, I recall all now, since the face you describe is veritably his; and I understand what is happening to us. His unquiet spirit, aware of the crowning impiety of burying his sin-laden flesh in Mecca, is aboard us, striving, to prevent that profanity of profanities."

The Kadi smiled sleekly within himself. He saw the way Savaran had managed to get aboard the *Allah-Din*.

"This body, then, is in the coffins on our deck," a man wailed. "Woe! Woe! I said it was fatal to carry such things."

"No, it is Shaitan," Hamsi shouted, furiously. "Shaitan naturally in the company of these infidel Rumi. Only by ridding ourselves of them, and especially the woman, can we save ourselves!"

"No!" the Kadi el Sifr thundered. "I, Jilbis el Sifr, tell you it is not so. It is a ghost haunting us from those coffins—demanding of us the prevention of this crowning sin. Only by obeying can we lay this wandering terror and protect ourselves."

The authority of the Kadi, his wealth, his wisdom and his well-displayed pistol mastered the men. They checked and listened. Only the captain asked:

"But how can we deal with such a spirit?"

"It is simple. While daylight lasts such ghosts are bound to the remains of their mortal clay, by ridding the ship of the corpse we rid it of the ghost."

"Ye-es," the captain mumbled. "But how can we tell which is the body among unnamed coffins? We cannot open all ——"

"No—never! It would be profanation," cried the crew.

"Assuredly," the Kadi nodded. "So we will cast all into the sea, unopened, now."

The Kadi el Sifr was really pleased with the quick working of his wits.

He had recognised at once that it could only be Savaran who was aboard; he had realised that the adventurer could have only come in a coffin with the connivance of the coffin-maker; he saw that since the ship had been well searched without finding him, he must have returned to the shelter of his casket—a cunning hiding place, as the Kadi agreed, since the superstitious seamen would not think of examining the coffins.

Savaran, then, was now in his coffin, probably in his arrogant sense of security, taking the sleep he had lost during the night. Even if that were not so, he, El Sifr, could, with his pistol and the support of the crew, kill the fellow before he could crawl from so tight a shell. Smiling his oiliest over so sure a triumph, he simpered:

"Yes, it is the only thing. It is well-known that the sea lays all ghosts. Come, the quicker and quieter we are, the less danger there will be of the spirit's escape."

A simple and beautiful murder—he was startled to find that even the ghost-fearers flared into opposition.

"Impiety!" a voice cried. "Desecrating the holy dead!"

"Will you be hounded to death by this unquiet, sinful spirit?" El Sifr cried.

"It is no man's spirit," Hamsi screamed. "It is Shaitan, the familiar of these Rumi. It is they who must be flung into the sea."

The surge towards the whites was so definite that they produced their pistols.

The display of weapons, however, cowed the weedy and cowardly crew, even if hate deepened in their eyes, and this fear the Kadi el Sifr drove home.

"Vermin and dirt!" he stormed, waving his own pistol in their faces. "You doubt the word of a True Believer like myself—a Kadi of the Prophet. You dare suggest that one of my sanctity is friendly with familiars of the Evil One! Out, before I call down the wrath of heaven to smite you. Out and heave those coffins overboard before I shoot you through the liver."

The riff-raff, cringing before the pistols, shrank under the blistering tone of the Kadi and went stumbling on to the deck, bunching together, officers and men, for terror of both the corpses and the Kadi.

They crept reluctantly aft. They opened wide a cargo-port in the rail of the well deck. Moving catfooted for very fear of waking the dead, they crawled to the coffins, cut their lashings and with a panic softness hurled them in ones and pairs and threes into the sea.

As the last coffin was engulfed without a burst of lightning death from the whippet figure of Savaran, the Kadi gave a great sigh of relief and turned to the whites. Only then were they able to hear the real, inside story of this "haunting."

"Only I, Jilbis el Sifr, was not fooled," he puffed. "At once I knew that our enemy, after escaping from the *kasbah*, had managed to smuggle himself aboard in one of those coffins."

"You mean—you mean you've just drowned that man, Savaran?" Miriam cried, gasping at the Kadi's callousness.

"As deep as the hell he deserves," cried the Kadi, exposing for a moment the malignance of his soul. "I—we are safe from him for ever."

Abruptly Miriam Paston was wondering whether "safe" was the right word. The evil she had just glimpsed had startled her.

Savaran watched his burial at sea with a bitter geniality.

Jilbis el Sifr, he thought, had failed to rise to the dignity of the occasion. He, in the circumstances, would have made such a subtle execution notable by the fullest pomp of ceremonial—but what could one expect from lesser minds.

Savaran, of course, was not in his coffin. He was standing on the little deck behind the bridge and captain's quarters and, carefully covered by one of the boats on the deck, was fully enjoying his own funeral. . . . If the Kadi el Sifr had been quick-witted, Savaran had been, undoubtedly, Savaran.

From his knot holes in the coffin he had observed the fear of the crew, more, he had listened to their talk about a ghost, even Hamsi's wilder convictions about Shaitan. He was flattered at the promotion, but not complaisant. He realised that the men were in a state to make trouble, even more, his uncanny ability to get inside the minds of others told him that directly the Kadi heard his description he would connect the "hauntings" and the coffins.

Therefore when the men rushed in a body to the saloon, he left his casket. There was not much danger about that. Only one seaman had remained on deck, the quartermaster, who dared not leave the wheel, and he was cut off from sight by the bridge houses.

Thanks to his exploration last night the lean man knew all the best routes. First he slid like a shadow into El Sifr's cabin, and, after swift examination, took from a drawer the two automatics the Kadi had taken from him in Kjweli; also the spare packets of cartridges; also every cartridge belonging to the Kadi. The Kadi was employing his only pistol.

From there he went up the short after ladder to the captain's deck, and entered the cabin from the rear. Here, too, he took possession of all available cartridges and the one antique revolver that went with them. Going forward he entered the chart-house, which, fortunately, was cut off from the steersman on the bridge to which it led. Here he put in a most profitable few minutes not only in noting the position of the ship, as pencilled on the chart that morning, but in studying the captain's log book.

The captain was a conscientious recorder. He had entered all he had found out about the Pastons, the number of lorries they had in the hold of the ship, even the cases of petrol, lubricant, spare parts, arms, ammunition and so forth.

Satisfied, he went back to the chart, studying it carefully and then examining the landmarks of the distant coast across the sea. It was then that the crew came on deck to deal with the coffins and Savaran, feeling that no man should miss his own burial, slipped back through the cabin to the shelter of the boat.

His gipsy face broke into a smile as he saw the way El Sifr preened himself over his brilliant stroke. Savaran thought it quite brilliant, too, it would provide him with such magnificent opportunities—especially since they were all so certain he was dead.

As the crew moved sullenly back to their duties, Savaran slipped aside the cover of the boat beside which he hid and with a nimble heave vanished inside.

He knew that there would be no further search for him, and that this time he could sleep in safety until it was the moment for Shaitan to haunt again.

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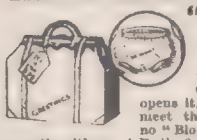

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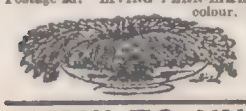

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BROTHER ORCHID

Continued from page 17

He wrung the weed's neck and hurled it into his basket.

"That's the only way to treat weeds."

"But is it?" said Brother Nasturtium. "Wasn't everything put into the world for some good use, if man had the sense to find out what that use is?"

Hungry after their day of work, the Little Brothers of the Flowers waited in the refectory for their abbot to come in and say grace. They tried to make light talk of events in their small world. But there was a shadow over them.

Abbot Jonquil entered, walking slowly. It came to them for the first time that he was a very old man.

"I'm afraid I have more bad news," he said. "Our funds have been taken from my safe. Of course none of us took them——"

He stopped and looked down the long table.

"Where is Brother Orchid?" he asked.

"Maybe he's in his cell, praying," said Brother Nasturtium. "Shall I fetch him?"

"Yes, please."

Brother Nasturtium came back alone. his face was twisted with trouble.

"Maybe I was wrong about weeds," he said.

In his office, Thomas Jefferson Brownlow, special prosecutor of rackets, was talking to the Press.

"Same old story, boys," he said. "All I can tell you is that men are selfish animals, and that's not news. I know Buck is back of all these new rackets. So do you. But I can't prove it in a court of law. The men who can simply will not go before the grand jury and tell their stories. They put their skins before their civic duty. I'm not blaming them. But the fact remains I can't force them to testify. They're not afraid of *me*. I wish they were. That's all to-day, gentlemen."

The reporters filed out. Brownlow bent morosely over the indictment of a jobless man who had stolen a peck of potatoes.

Swerling, his assistant, bustled in.

"Chief," he said, "they're back."

"Who?"

"Those florists and laundrymen and fruit peddlers. And they're ready to talk."

"But what's got into 'em?"

"You have me there."

"It doesn't matter," said Brownlow, "if they'll talk. Send 'em in and lock all the doors."

Once they started to talk Thomas Jefferson Brownlow had a hard job to stop them. The grand jury was back before its seats in the box had cooled off, and shortly thereafter Jack Buck and three of his top aides were passengers on a special train that would not stop till it had carried them to a station near a big, grey gate. Most of his lesser lieutenants also took trips, accompanied by large, official-looking men, who returned alone. A few escaped, some by taking to their heels, others by wriggling through loop-holes in the law.

Mr. Brownlow was walking toward his office, when he bumped into Mr. Chris Poppadoppalous emerging from the room where witnesses are paid their fees. Mr. Poppadoppalous beamed, bowed, and handed Mr. Brownlow a large box.

"Gardenias," he said. "I brink dem for you."

"Thanks," said Brownlow. "And there's one more thing you can do for me."

"Anythink," said Mr. Poppadoppalous.

"One day you boys were afraid to talk. The next day you talked. Why?"

"We were afraid not to," said Mr. Poppadoppalous.

"Afraid of me?" asked Brownlow, rather pleased.

"Oh, no, sir," he said. "You're a nice mans. You don't say, 'Talk, you Greek So-and-so, or I'll tear out your heart and eat it before your eyes."

"Did somebody say that to you?"

"Yes, sir. To all us boys."

"Who?"

"The little fellow," said Mr. Poppadoppalous, and bowed, and scurried away.

From his hotel window Little John Sarto looked out over the lighted city. Somebody knocked on his door.

"Come in," said Sarto.

The freckled young man came in. He had on a new suit, moss-green this time, and he was still jovial

"Hello, sweetheart," he said. "You know why I'm here."

"Sure," said Sarto. "Have a drink?"

"Why not?" said Eddie, and poured out a drink from a bottle of bourbon.

"Nice going, boss," said Eddie, raising his glass. "We'll run this town right."

"We?"

"You will, I mean," said Eddie. "I'll be glad to work under a man with your brains. Poor Jack didn't have many. Nerve, yes. But he never looked ahead. You do. Well, what do you say, boss? Dummy and some of the boys are waiting downstairs for the answer. They're solid for you, boss. Anything you say goes.

Sarto didn't say anything. He went to the window and looked out over the city.

"Of course, things are rather ragged right now," said Eddie. "We'll have to take it slow and easy for a while. But the boys are counting on you to work out some nice, new, juicy angles. The town's yours."

"I don't want it," said Little John.

"What do you mean?" Eddie was not jovial now.

"I got other plans."

"The boys won't like that."

"I'm doing what *I* like."

"That's always expensive," said Eddie.

"I know all about that."

Eddie shrugged his shoulders.

"Okay," he said, and sauntered out of the room.

Hurriedly, Little John Sarto began to strip off his loud, plaid suit.

"I'm right," said the warden to the chaplain, laying down the morning paper. "You say all men have some good in them. I say some men are all bad and nothing can change them. Take this fellow Sarto. Last night, in Chicago, as he was getting on a bus, he was filled full of lead."

"That hardly proves your point." The chaplain smiled. "Bullets are very democratic. They'll kill good men as well as bad, you know."

"There was nothing good about Sarto. Just listen to this: 'The police say Sarto plotted to return to power in the underworld. They are at a loss to explain why, at the time of his death, he was disguised as a monk.' Why, the scheming wolf! Whether there's any good whatsoever in such a man, I leave it to you to judge."

"He sounds pretty bad, I grant you," the chaplain said. "But, even so, I hate to condemn him or any man. I might be reversed by a higher Judge."

PUZZLE—FIND THE TRAMP

Continued from page 9

It made Cannan swear.

"Clues or no clues," he said, "I don't care a damn. Beaver's the man. I *know* it. Proof or no proof. There's something in his eye when he looks at me. And *wasn't* he pleased that Flagg couldn't identify him?"

Gaiety moved to fresh fields and the island went, in the local phrase, to pot. Paint came off everything and nobody cared. Trees grew mossy and weeds did just as they liked. Old men grew older and some of them died. Young men grew middle-aged and gave up trying. Flagg went bankrupt and disappeared, ages back. Ferryman succeeded ferryman.

Apart from the fact that Mr. Camberwell is a bit of a misery, and a place like the Island is to-day just suits bits of a misery, there's nothing much about him to interest us. But he has to be mentioned because he decided, a month or two ago, to pull down a dropped-to-bits bungalow called "The Anchor" and on its site build himself a place in which to pass the rest of his depressing days And last week he called the builders in and got going. And that's where and when and how they found the skeleton.

They found it under what had been a wood-shed and it caused a tremendous sensation.

They found shreds of its clothes and some old bone buttons and a piece of check cloth that looked as if. at one time, it had been part of a cap.

They came out of their bungalows and out of the lounge of the Island House, they even came across from the river banks to stare and whisper.

Then the police arrived and moved them back from the wood-shed and brought spades and dug and went into the Island House, and used the telephone more in half an hour than it had been used in six months. And in the early afternoon, Cannan of the Big Five came out from the Yard and took charge.

If there was a sentimental side to Cannan it said its little piece that afternoon, for not since the long-gone days of the indignant Beaver had Cannan of the Big Five set foot on the Island.

He went into the shed and talked to the local P.C. He talked to the doctor and, when the whispers became louder and reached him, he talked to the old men of the Island, who were whispering "Macray."

He wanted to know.

It was that bit of check cap that had done it. Macray had worn a cap just like that. Who was Macray? Well, difficult to say, after all this time. He had had one of the furnished bungalows for six months or so, years ago. How many years? Oh, years and years. Twenty years? *Must* be twenty years.

"You remember Macray, old man. Back in the days when old Flagg had the Island House"

And Cannan of the Big Five poked his finger about in the exhibits and wrote a lot of things down in his note book and stayed till quite late in the afternoon.

And not so long afterwards, on his first day off, he went, not as part of his job, but because he felt like it, to Broadstairs, to have a word with Sir Marshall Lydd, retired to live by the sea, and who took some time trying to place him.

"It was the night Flagg was knocked out in the Island House," said Cannan of the Big Five. "Twenty years ago. You were the G.P. there and I was the local P.C."

"I've got you," said Sir Marshall Lydd. "There was a tramp with whiskers or something."

"There *was*. And a button," said Cannan of the Big Five.

"I remember," said Sir Marshall Lydd.

So Cannan told his story about the skeleton and produced the buttons they had found and another button that *he* had found, twenty years before, and had kept somewhere, because it was part of one of his very first cases.

"And it isn't only the button," he said. "They found on what was left of the cloth, something which turned out to be what was left of red ink."

"Well, I'm damned!" exclaimed Sir Marshall.

"So that," said Cannan, "it was Macray, whoever *he* was, who walked into trouble on the island that night, and stopped the right from old Flagg, and got himself buried under the wood-shed. Although I'm as certain as ever that it was Beaver who knocked Flagg out with a poker and emptied the cash register at two o'clock in the morning, when, no doubt, Flagg came in from burying the body. I won't say it's a pity that Beaver's burglary got itself mixed up with Flagg's little murder and led us astray, because Flagg's little murder was a good little murder and has managed to keep itself hidden for twenty years. But it *is* a pity that Flagg's little murder interfered in Beaver's burglary, because we might, at any rate, have got Beaver for poker-work and the cash-register. As it was, we never got a thing. Clues ought to keep themselves to the case that they belong to."

"How," asked Sir Marshall, "do you propose to get in touch with our Mr. Flagg?"

"That," said Cannan of the Big Five, "is the problem."

And it still is.

The woman looked surprised at what she evidently regarded as a ridiculous question

SAVING HIS BACON

BY GILBERT HORSLER

ILLUSTRATED BY SINCLAIR CALOW

ANDREW BACON was worried, an unusual circumstance for a man who, normally, went through life the placid, optimistic centre of a cyclone of troubles. Ordinarily, Andrew generously allowed his friends and business associates to do the worrying. Seldom were they deficient of cause.

Pushing back his hat to an angle that defied every accepted law of gravity, he viewed the huge pile of hat boxes which the railway vanman had delivered, with a dismayed air. Sighing deeply, he drew a feverish hand across a moist forehead; in the other hand he held a letter . . . a darkly ominous letter, in almost every word of which lurked the promise of tragic disaster. The letter was from Doyle of Lion Ticket—largest of the London wholesale buyers—what it lacked in courtesy it more than recovered in lucidity.

"I can't understand it, Simpson; can't understand it at all. It was such a ridiculous mistake to make," bleated Bacon, plaintively.

"It was my fault, sir. The number must have got stuck wrong way round in my head. I admit it, sir . . .

"I suppose it was an honest mistake and it's brave of you to own up to it," said Bacon, weakly. "Of course, if I had not been away travelling in the north I should have noticed the matter, having myself sold Doyle the hats, but you were not to know which shape he has ordered, and the mixing of 391 for 193 was, I suppose, the sort of thing that might have happened to anybody. It might have happened to me.

"Unfortunately," he continued, "Mr. Doyle has taken the matter in a most regrettable spirit. Here is what he says :"

In tremulous tones Bacon read from the letter in his hand.

"Dear Mr. Bacon,

"I have just received from you one hundred dozen hats, supposed to be of the shape that I ordered from you, yourself, last week. When I state that the hat that I ordered was a small, tight, cloche model, and that those you have delivered are large, wide-brimmed shapes, so completely out of fashion that I would not encumber my warehouse with them at a gift . . . you will not be surprised that I am returning the whole consignment at your expense.

"I have no additional comment to make except that you need not trouble to remake the original order."

Neither finding, nor expecting any helpful suggestion from his criminally careless employee, Andrew took his troubles to his friend, Amos Benn.

"Morning, 'Drew," Amos greeted. "Anything wrong? You look worried?"

"I am worried. . . . Terribly worried. . . . I am afraid this will be the end of me. I never dreamed he would get those numbers mixed like that, and then Doyle has taken it badly. . . . Very badly indeed . . . and after all these years of cordial business relations too . . . !"

Amos scratched his head. He turned at the entry of his son and junior partner in the hope that a possible inspiration might come from that quarter :

"Mr. Bacon's in serious trouble, Phillip. . . . That idiot of a Simpson has got one of Doyle's numbers mixed, with the consequence that Doyle has thrown a hundred dozen hats back on Andrew's hands. . . . Don't by any chance know where we could place them for him?"

"Not an earthly chance," answered Phillip.

"Why do you say that? You don't even know what the hats are like!"

"I know they are Mr. Bacon's!"

Suddenly. . . . "I've got an idea," ejaculated Amos. . . . "Zac Burgess . . . ! Amongst his other activities he runs a few market stalls. He might manage to job these off for you, 'Drew, at one of his country markets. . . . It's the right time of the year, and these country places are not so particular about shape."

"I wonder where I can find Burgess?" questioned, Andrew, eagerly.

"In the private bar of the *Cow and Bull*, most likely," opinioned Phillip. "That man lives almost entirely by suction."

"I think it would be better if I came along with you," said Amos, reaching for his hat. "You are about as safe in the hands of a crafty schemer like Burgess, as would be a dear little lambikin in a hungry lion's den. Main thing to remember is not to let him get his hands on your cash unless you are on the spot. That man and other people's money, are the hardest things I know to part."

Zac received the project enthusiastically, as indeed he was ready to receive any suggestion that hinted at reward for himself without personal outlay. His only regret was the presence of the hard-headed Benn; he would have preferred to deal with the easy-going Andrew alone.

"I believe I know the identical place where I can shift the stuff," promised Zac. "It's a country market near a big corset factory that employs thousands of girls. We can job the hats off for three and eleven a piece, which is a shilling more than you would have got from Doyle. If we split the extra, that will be an additional sixpence profit for you . . . and I can have the other for my trouble."

It seemed a fair proposition and, after a short consideration, Amos advised his friend to close the deal :

"Mind . . ." he warned Burgess, "Mr. Bacon himself will be on the spot, so no trying to land an extra shilling for yourself and so limiting sales. We want to make this a thorough clear out, if possible."

Zaccariah's face fell, actually he had been counting on doing just that very thing, however, he could not very well raise an objection without admitting his intentions :

"Of course, I shall be pleased to have Mr. Bacon on the scene," he said, then added in injured tones, "Not that I

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think you meant that last remark seriously, Mr. Benn. You surely know me too well to suspect me of any underhand dealing."

"It's because I do know you that I am making the condition." countered Amos, grimly. Then, leaving Bacon and the market man to work out details, he returned to his own factory to face the facetiousisms of his son and partner.

"It's nice not to have any troubles or worries of our own . . . leaves us free to get mussed up in other people's," growled Phillip, darkly. "Doyle, for instance, for whom we've got that big line of cloches would be delighted to know that we were neglecting him to try and help Bacon undercut the retail shopkeepers whom he serves."

"Hang it all," expostulated the senior partner," I can't stand by and see an old friend practically ruined, if an idea of mine can save him."

The following Saturday, which had been chosen by Burgess as the best time for the venture, turned out auspiciously fine and the old-fashioned market town of Hatcham, lazed under a blazing sun.

A slyly slipped half a crown into the ready palm of a market attendant, secured for the adventurers a privileged pitch in the dead centre of the market and, after a short period of energetic bustle, the large, trestled stall was gaily alive with heaped, vividly hued hats, their large, sweeping brims promising shade and coolness from the golden orb above. For the first time since their return from Doyle, Bacon felt something that was not hatred for the goods of his manufacture, as he stepped back to admire the results of their combined labours.

"Not so bad," he said. "At that price the girls should fight for them. That is, if the shape doesn't frighten them. Wide brims are right out of fashion now.

"That won't make any difference out here," cheered Zac. "Now, Mr. Bacon . . . as things are bound to be quiet for an hour or so, suppose you keep an eye on the stall while I go and get a glass of—er . . . coffee. I'll come back and take over when the rush commences."

Left to himself, Andrew gazed complacently round the sleepy square. Always a super optimist, he was already counting his gains from the day, even as, in his minds eye, he visualised a mighty chain of profit-making hat stalls that stretched from one end of England to the other. To a less rosy vision, the prospects would not have appeared so encouraging, for, beyond the other stallholders, the square looked barren of life, then, gradually a few natives began to trickle along. Most of these were elderly matrons with shopping baskets and babies. One such stopped curiously in front of the stall.

In his time Andrew had sold many thousands of hats, but always in dozens and grosses; this was the first occasion that he had ever endeavoured to sell an individual hat to the prospective wearer.

"Can I sell you a nice hat, madam?" he asked with a slight bow that he imagined to be the correct thing.

The woman looked surprised at what she evidently regarded as a ridiculous question. She viewed the heaped headgear disparagingly :

"Got more 'ats nor wot I've got 'eads now. . . . He-he-he," she laughed raucously at her own joke. It was a treasured and time honoured one.

It was not a propitious start, and Bacon felt some of his previous optimism begin to wane . . . another hour of weary changing from one aching foot to the other and it was down below the zero mark, for, with the exception of four other offspring-encumbered ladies, who all knew . . . and considered it a duty to work off . . . the whiskered joke of the first arrival, he did not have an enquiry. It was with a mixture of misery and relief, that he welcomed the return of his partner in adventure.

Zac's spirits were as high as his colleague's were low. In his hand he carried a large white card on which he had evidently been writing. The scent of his breath hinted at "coffee" of unusual potency. To Andrew's tale of woe he turned a disdainful ear :

"No use taking any notice of those old women. They've never got any money anyway." he comforted. "It's the girls from the factory that we are after, and I've just heard some great news about them. It seems they are all going on a 'work's outing' to the seaside to-morrow, and that means they will want new things to go in . . . hats especially. All the shops in the place are making special preparations . . . and . . . so are we. What do you think of this?" Proudly he displayed the card.

"HUGE SALE OF BANKRUPT STOCK . . . AT LESS THAN COST PRICE," read Bacon.

"But—" he protested, "I'm not bankrupt."

"You jolly well will be if we don't sell these," grinned Zac. "So it comes to the same thing. Now you have a nice rest while I look after the stall. The girls will be pouring along from work very shortly . . . and that's the time to catch them . . . with the money in their pockets."

Left to his own devices, Andrew discovered a roomy, cool café and, over a sandwich, mused miserably on his troubles.

His reverie was broken by the entry of a group of laughing, chattering girls of a surprisingly uniform prettiness. Guessing these to be the advance guard of the corset workers of whom Zac had spoken, Andrew regarded the influx with an interested eye. With a still further sinking of the heart, he noted that they were—to a girl—hatless. His fears that these lasses were members of the increasing army of the hatless brigade, were fortunately, to be swiftly dispelled.

The first comers had not been sipping their tea for more than a few minutes, when they were joined by two new arrivals. Bacon's heart, which had been bumping perilously near his boots, lifted skywards at their entry, for both were proudly flaunting wide, sweeping-brimmed hats . . . his, Andrew's hats :

"What do you think of these?" demanded the taller of the two. "Girls, we've discovered the bargain of a lifetime. Just the thing for to-morrow. There's a stall in the market practically giving them away—only three and eleven each. They'd cost quite double in the shops."

In a second, she and her companion were surrounded—mobbed would be the better word—by eager, enquiring friends; most of whom wished to try on the new headgear . . . after which, they, in their turn, scurried away to get in on the ground floor of this Eldorado before conscienceless rivals had skimmed the cream of the colours.

His half eaten sandwich neglected in front of him, Andrew watched, as in a dream, the salving of his fortunes that was taking place under his nose, for, as each fresh bevy of girls entered what was evidently a favourite Saturday rendezvous, they were brought up sharp by the sight of the hats now sported by the first arrivals. Almost without exception, they, too, hurried away to secure one of these wonderful bargains; hasting, sheeplike, to be in what would undoubtedly be the fashion of the morrow. Before long the café was a tossing sea of wide-brimmed hats . . . alike in everything but colour.

Although he knew that it was his duty to go to the assistance of his evidently hard-pressed partner, Andrew sat tight in his new-found joy. In any case, not for double the anticipated profit, would he have faced these saucy young amazons over the boards of a market stall. The afternoon was drawing to a close, and the crowds dispersing, when he at last made his way back.

He discovered Zaccariah . . . hot, dishevelled, exceedingly thirsty, but exhuberant; from a grubby forefinger and thumb, dangled one lone, beige hat—it

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was all that was left of Doyle's returned hundred dozen :

"Never had such a killing in my life," exulted Zac. "These girls fairly rushed me off my feet." He turned to a wistful-looking lass of eighteen or so; the last of the crowd that had so recently thronged the stall. Her pinched cheeks and shabby shoes told their own story. She was regarding the hat with hungry, longing eyes.

"Here you are, my dear . . . the last of the Mohicans ! What do you say? Come, I'll let you have it for a couple of bob to make a clean sweep."

The girl shook a despondent head : "I haven't got two shillings. I'm out of work," she faltered, in thin tones.

The salesman shot an enquiring glance at Bacon. In answer to an emphatic nod from that gentleman :

"If you think that we are going to be encumbered by this hat for the rest of the day, you are jolly well mistaken," he grinned. "Here you are, my dear. Take it, with our compliments. Perhaps it will get you a job . . . or a sweetheart." Then, turning from the girl's stammering thanks : "Come along, Mr. Bacon. Let's go and proportion the spoils. I have discovered a nice little private bar; the pubs keep open all day on market days.

* * *

"It's disgraceful, Maria . . . absolutely disgraceful, the number of girls one sees nowadays without hats. No wonder the trade is going to the dogs." Doyle, who was taking a Sunday breather by the salt waves, glared strong disapproval at a passing group of laughing, hatless lasses.

"It seems to get worse every year," agreed Mrs. Doyle. "But they are not all hatless yet, I am pleased to see." She glanced past her husband.

Following the direction of his wife's gaze, the buyer gave a sudden start. But it was not the undeniable good looks of the two girls that came sauntering along the promenade that caused his surprise . . . they might have been waxen models for all he noticed in that direction. What did draw his attention was the hats they were wearing. Doyle never forgot a hat that had once passed through his hands and he had particular cause to remember this shape :

"Bacon must have got rid of that line—and quickly at that," he muttered. 'I did not think there was a buyer in the trade that would touch that shape with a pair of tongs." He was watching the passing of the girls with a morbid eye when :

"I'll be bothered if there are not some more of the identical shape—quite a crowd of them," ejaculated Mrs. Doyle, brightly. "I thought you said wide brims were right out of fashion. They must be returning."

Gaping like a stranded codfish, the buyer watched another round half-dozen wide brims go bobbing gaily past, their only difference—their hues. Then, after a short interlude, another and again still another bunch of the same distinctive headgear, until, to the distorted eye of the buyer, the whole sea front appeared alive with nothing but the hats that he had so foolishly sent back, for, knowing nothing of the Hatcham firm's annual outing, there could, he thought, be only one reasonable explanation of the phenomenon.

Obviously, a rival buyer—most likely with early information—had taken a chance on the line and, unloading them at once to the retailers, the large-brimmed shapes, coinciding with one of those sudden, unaccountable swings of fashion with which everyone connected with the millinery trade is only too familiar, had caught on with a rush.

In a short ten minutes, Doyle checked up on fifty passing girls. Twenty-odd were hatless. Five were wearing non-descript headgear—chiefly cloches—and the rest were gaily displaying Andrew Bacon's despised wares.

"This means that Andrew will be deluged with repeats next week," mourned Doyle. "The shops must have cleared the entire delivery in record time. I must see into the matter early on Monday."

Andrew had hardly had time to glance through his meagre post on the following morning, when the ting of his showroom bell sent him hurrying to greet his unexpectedly early caller. To his surprise it was the great Doyle himself who, almost apologetically for him, entered the showroom.

"Morning, Bacon. Didn't expect to see me so bright and early, eh?" He smiled affably. "As a matter of fact I've slipped down to see you about that consignment of hats I returned to you last week. I have heard a rumour that there may be a return to wide brims and I thought that I might after all risk taking them off your hands." He shot a keen glance at the embarrassed manufacturer.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Doyle, b-but I've already cleared the line," stammered Bacon, flushing vividly.

The buyer, who knew this only too well, waited a moment expectantly. It was strictly against business etiquette for him to ask to whom the hats had been sold, dearly as he would have liked to know. On the other hand, the information was of a type sometimes volunteered by manufacturers. In this case his curiosity was to remain unsatisfied. There was a limit to even the indiscretions of an Andrew Bacon and, for once, that gentleman remained wisely silent.

"Ah well, I'm very pleased to hear that," lied the buyer. "What is more, if wide brims *are* coming back; that was not a bad shape of yours. On consideration, you had better repeat the order for me. Better still, double it, and mind you let me have the hats away quickly."

"Your order shall come before everything," fervently promised Andrew, who had indeed, not another twelfth of a dozen on his books at that moment.

While Bacon was basking in the sunshine of Doyle's renewed favour, Amos Benn was giving his son and heir a gentle reminder as to the pleasures of unselfish philanthropy. Amos was feeling in an expansive mood, for there are few more comfortable conditions than that engendered by the knowledge of a helping hand held out to a fellow traveller along life's stony highway.

"I met 'Drew Bacon last evening," he said. "It seems that that wheeze of mine turned up trumps. 'Drew was jubilant. He told me that he and Zac Burgess bumped into a work's outing and they sold out completely. 'Drew is better off than he would have been in the first place."

"Which I suppose means that Bacon will now be trying to rope you into a scheme for running a chain of market stalls all over the country, if I know anything about him," grunted Phillip. "That will mean more trouble."

"I fail to see your reason for saying *more* trouble," said Amos, stiffly.

"No, but you will," prophesied Phillip, on whose shoulders had temporarily fallen the mantle of an Elijah. He turned at the tinkle of the showroom bell : "Why, it's Mr. Doyle. This is an unexpected pleasure, sir." The speaker advanced with outstretched hand.

"On the contrary, I'm afraid I have got some bad news for you both," said Doyle, after he had acknowledged the greeting. "It's about that last order I gave you for those cloche models. How are you getting on with them?"

"Only about a third of them ready yet, Mr. Doyle," said Amos, with an inward foreboding, for it had been an exceptionally heavy order.

"Well, it's a good job that you have not made any more, because I shall have to cancel the rest. To tell you the truth, there seems to have been a complete revolution in fashion. I slipped down to Brighton for a few hours on Sunday and every second girl was wearing a wide-brimmed hat. If you are wise you will get a fresh range of shapes out immediately. Andrew Bacon has one that looks like a real winner."

ENGLAND'S NEW WOODEN WALLS

ONE of the most important sections of Woman's Fair, which opens at Olympia in November, will be devoted to the modern products which are considered by a Selection Committee to be in keeping with present-day standards of good design and good taste.

The exhibits in this section will cover every phase of design for living from furniture to plastics, from gifts to kitchen equipment. Before being accepted, each exhibit will be passed by a committee which will include both those who are familiar with the problems of each individual industry, and representative members of the public.

In this section more than a dozen typical rooms will be shown. They will be so designed that they are within reach of the moderate purse, but some of the most interesting will undoubtedly be the eighteen-year-old's bed-sitting-room; a music room; a dining-room for a medium-size family and a sitting-room which will probably have tremendous influence on future designs for this type of room. There will also be a series of rooms showing the practical value in home decoration of woods and leather, for both furniture and walls.

A display of gifts which are unusual, but restrained in design will help those who wish to make novel Christmas presents, while the section generally will offer the public unrivalled facilities for information and advice on home furnishings.

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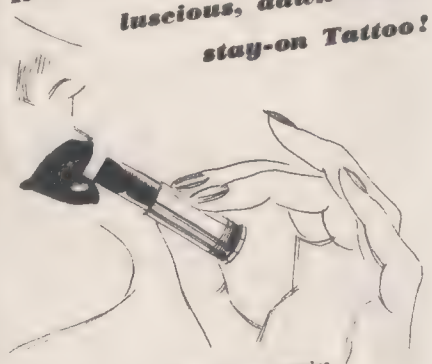

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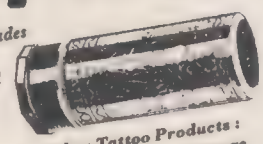

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C.A. 559

VIRGINIA HALL'S PAGE

RECENTLY, I was sitting next to a man at a dinner party and he told me all about the corps of eighty flying girls who are in the service of Air France.

Their job, as members of the Sanitary Aviation Division of the Red Cross, is to render air travel as comfortable as it is speedy, and to care for the sick who, in increasing numbers, are using this marvellously swift and easy means of transportation when the doctor orders a change of climate.

The air service has also proved a godsend to victims of accidents in outlying regions, who are so seriously ill that they could probably not survive the train journey to a hospital. For example, there is a special airport at Rheims, near the huge, new hospital, with a fleet of little planes used only in the service of the sick and for the quick delivery of serums and medical appliances needed urgently, although, of course, the regular airports also care for such emergency cases. And always these accomplished young women are in attendance.

Just as the stewardesses of American aviation lines must be registered nurses, France's "flying girls" all have their diplomas. Many of them have already received their pilots' licences, and several are fully-fledged doctors. They are under the direction of Mme. Jean Schneider, herself a former pilot, whose husband is General Secretary of Air France. His negotiations regarding the establishment of commercial transatlantic air travel necessitate frequent trips to the United States, on which Mme. Schneider often accompanies him.

She has twice "sky-slept" across the United States and recently she completed a trip around the world, mostly by air. According to Mme. Schneider, French women are intensely interested in aviation, and all the girls in the flying nurses' corps have tried for their pilots' licences on their own initiative.

Ministering angels—who really fly!

★ I remember last year when I went to watch the Calcutta Cup Rugby Match at Twickenham I had a very dirty face! The wind had been blowing dust across half my face all the afternoon, so that when the game was over and I met some friends outside, I looked rather like a fox terrier, with one half of my face absolutely black.

I cleaned myself up as well as I could, but certainly didn't feel at my best and longed for a good basin of water and large cake of soap!

This year, however, if I go to Twickenham and get my face filthy again, I shan't worry, because there is a new beauty aid which is receiving enthusiastic praise from busy women everywhere. This preparation instantly removes every trace of dust, dirt, stale lipstick, rouge and powder, leaving the skin invigorated and refreshed, and provides a base for new make-up.

It comes in a tube which is supplied, complete with a little sponge, in a hygienic, moisture-proof container. All you have to do is to squeeze a little of the fluid on the sponge and it is ready for instant application. The whole outfit will slip into your handbag.

It's easy to realise the possibilities of such an outfit. No longer need lengthy train or car journeys bother the fastidious woman. With a supply of this facial cleanser she can leave in the certain knowledge that she will arrive at her destination looking as fresh as when she left.

To the sports girl, the business woman, the harassed housewife, this beauty wash will prove a real boon. Nor is the price beyond anyone's reach, for a large tube, containing many weeks' supply, only costs 1s., while the handbag size is 6d. If you would like to try this smaller size send me 6d. in stamps, marking your envelope "Beauty Wash," and I will have one sent to you.

★ A man I know, who is a confirmed gourmet, has just come home from a holiday in Normandy with this attractive recipe.

You will need 6 fillets of sole, 2 or 3 shallots, ¾ to 1 pint of cider (depending on the size of the fillets), flour, butter, salt and pepper.

Put the fillets in a fire-proof dish, salt and pepper to taste, sprinkle with the chopped shallots and add the cider. Cook in a moderate oven for about 15 to 20 minutes or until the fish is tender. When done, pour off the cider into a pan. Add 3 or 4 tablespoonfuls of butter and a little flour. Stir well over a small flame until the contents begin to thicken slightly and are perfectly smooth. Add a little chopped parsley to the sauce and pour it over the fish.

★ Many of this year's evening dresses are full skirted, but if you have a slinky one, don't think that you can't bring it up to the moment with very little time, trouble and expense. If, for instance, you have a straight, black crêpe dress, all you need do is to gather some black taffeta on to a piece of ribbon, measuring the same as your waist plus two ends to make a bow. When this is finished it will look something like a bunch apron, but when you put it round your waist, tying the bow at the front, it will completely rejuvenate last year's dress.

If you have an evening dress with wide shoulder straps, you can make it into a simple little dinner dress by wearing under it a white muslin blouse with full sleeves. It will then have the appearance of a peasant-like pinafore dress.

And if, since last year, you have grown just a little bit fatter and your evening dress is slightly tight in the bodice, why not cut it down to the waist in front, face the edges, have eyelets put down each side, and lace it up with matching or contrasting laces or ribbon. You can put a piece of matching ribbon underneath which won't show, but will prevent your undies (or your flesh) from peeping through. You'll be able to breathe freely again!

★ When I was travelling on the Underground the other day, a girl came and sat opposite. She had a lovely pair of legs inside the sheerest of sheer silk stockings but, for all that, those legs looked horrible. They might have belonged to an ape! Just because summer is nearly over and stockings have gone on again, so many women get careless about whiskery legs. And I think that whiskers showing through stockings look almost worse than on bare legs.

Now unwanted hair on legs need no longer remain a source of trouble to the chic woman. There are, on the market, some hair-removing gloves and a few minutes massage with these from time to time will keep the skin satin-smooth and quite free from unsightly growths. Beneath the touch of these gloves hair appears to melt away—without odour, without mess and without irritation or clogging of the pores.

All you have to do is to make sure that the skin to be treated is perfectly dry, then with a circular movement first one way and then the other, gently wipe the hairs away with one of these gloves. When the hair has fallen away, a little cold cream should be applied.

These gloves are cheap, too. Only 6d. a pair and both sides of each can be used.

So don't, for the sake of 6d., go around looking like a living example of Darwin's theory. Write to me, enclosing 6d. in stamps and marking your envelope "whiskers" and I will send a pair of these hair-removing gloves to you.

★ I've just had a telephone call from a man who must have had a very fine moustache, for he certainly was speaking very indistinctly.

I eventually found out that his name was MacAlpin, for he spelt it out to me. This is what he said: "M for Magneto, A for Axle, C for Carburetter, A for Accelerator, L for Lever, P for Petroleum," by which time I very nearly added: "I for Insane and N for Nuts."

It really is amazing the words people use to indentify letters. Out of curiosity I found out from the telephone people the correct procedure when it's necessary to spell out any word. This is what they advise:

A for Andrew, B for Benjamin, C for Charlie, D for David, E for Edward, F for Frederick, G for George, H for Harry, I for Isaac, J for Jack, K for King, L for Lucy, M for Mary, N for Nellie, O for Oliver, P for Peter, Q for Queenie, R for Robert, S for Sugar, T for Tommy, U for Uncle, V for Victor, W for William, X for Xmas, Y for Yellow and Z for Zebra.

I hope you read this, Mr. MacAlpin!

If you are interested in any of the things mentioned in these pages, please write to Virginia Hall, c/o "The Passing Show," 92 Long Acre, W.C.2, for she is very willing to help

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BILL THE PUP

BY FRANK GERALD

"We're coming, Bill, we're coming," and as we rushed down the hill, the fire raced up to meet us! We found the little chap exhausted

MY pal and I—and Bill the Pup—lived on the side of a volcano, and when danger threatened, we took refuge down its crater!

This was in New Zealand; the whole of the north island is volcanic; there are hot springs at Waiwera; there *were* pink terraces at Rotomahana and even the beautifully situated cricket ground at Auckland lies at the foot of Mount Eden, an extinct volcano.

Our volcano stood on the edge of the luxuriant Waikato country, and our two-roomed, wooden hut was built on a wedge shaped bit of ground cut out of the side of the mountain like a piece of cheese.

Within ten feet of our back door the bare earth wall rose up straight as a dart; on either side it did the same; only in front was there a clearing—there, spread out before us, lay hundreds of acres of every description of fruit, growing, in those days, almost wild.

Then, beyond, the bush and the giant eucalyptus, backed in the distance by the blue blur of the mountain range and the spiral of smoke from a slumbering volcano. A mile or two away on either side the ocean rolled, taking on perhaps a deeper blue even than the mountain range.

The sides of our mountain were ringed with terraces that rose as regularly as if they had been specially designed by some expert gardener, instead of being formed by the streams of hissing lava that had poured from nature's mouth, the crater of the volcano, up above.

I have to describe things rather minutely or it would be difficult for me, with any sense of reality, to picture to you the tragedy from which my pal and I—and Bill the Pup—escaped so narrowly later on.

It had been a blazing hot day, the day of my story, and we had waited until the sun had cooled off before starting to gather the fruit from our orange grove inside the crater. On its sloping sides the trees flourished in the rich, chocolate coloured earth so prolifically that the branches were weighed down with fruit.

It was only when we went down the crater to gather the fruit that Bill the Pup was chained up. Every day he ran free and went with us everywhere, but we never took him with us to gather the oranges for fear that in his wild excitement he would vanish down the crater that yawned below.

It was a most unhappy day for Bill the Pup. With our empty sacks we clambered up the terraces. Nearing the top we took a breather, smoking a cigarette and gazing at the wondrous panorama spread out before us. Shading his eyes, my friend said, "There's a lot of smoke coming out of old 'Rangipoko,' or whatever his name may be."

I looked, and looked again. "That's not 'Rangipoko' as you are pleased to call him, that's a bush fire." Bush fires were common enough in those dried up days. "So it is," he agreed, "Well, it's bearing away to the right and won't get us if ever it reaches this far, unless the wind rises and chops round, then we'd be in a warm corner, my lad."

With that we reached the hill top and, with our sacks handy, we started picking the fruit. It was easy work at first; the branches of some of the trees rose over the lip of the crater and the slope was very gradual, but as we worked round the lower rings it steepened until it was difficult to keep our footing and pluck oranges at the same time.

The heat was intense; there wasn't a breath of air moving in that "oven" at the mountain top.

We reached the last ring of trees and now we had to be careful; it was a ticklish job. Ten feet below yawned that black gaping mouth!

If we slipped, if a branch we held on to broke, nothing could save us—we should disappear—God knows where! I remembered the first time we ventured down there exploring—how we rolled a stone over the edge and listened—yes, listened, and listened, but we heard nothing. Not a sound came back to us; no echo reached us. The stone we rolled had fallen down, down, down . . .

At length it was all done. The last orange was picked. Still holding on to the trees, we sat down and rested. Hot and tired, for a few minutes we sat in silence.

"Must be getting late," my pal muttered," or else there's a storm brewing—got jolly dark all at once, hasn't it?" We looked up at the sky, and in a moment we were on our feet. "Look out, for God's sake, look out."

The branch snapped in his hand, his feet slipped over the ridge on which we stood, and down he went. I don't remember things exactly, but I must have made a dive and tackled him low.

For a moment we lay there, panting, half over the edge of that bottomless pit!

"Steady," I said, "now, all together," and, with a heave, we rolled over to safety.

We climbed to the top—columns of smoke and flame were leaping up towards us! The wind had changed and fanned the fire we had seen in the distance into flames that shot, through the smoke, fifty feet into the air. We looked aghast at each other, and then—*a dog barked*! It was Bill the Pup!!

It wasn't much of a bark; it sounded faint and tired as if he had been calling us for a long time. Again the poor, weak bark came, he cried for help, he called us to come and save him, there was no mistaking what the dog was saying.

Without a word, down the terraces we leapt, shouting to him as we ran, "We're coming, Bill, we're coming," and as we rushed down the hill, the fire raced up to meet us!

We found the little chap exhausted with his struggles to get free and mad with fright.

"Hold him tight while I get him a drink," I said. That done, I went on: "You go on, make for the crater, it's our only chance. Don't let Bill go, for God's sake, he's mad with fright, he'll rush into the fire or jump down that black pit; go on for your life, I'll follow."

I filled a water bottle and threw two old jackets and a small blanket into the water tank. When they were soaked I staggered up the hill with them after my pal and Bill the Pup, and after me came the fire.

We reached the top together, and down the first easy slopes of the crater we went. For a moment we rested, but the Pup struggled so to get free that he nearly had my friend over.

"This won't do," I said, "he'll roll you over and himself too, and down that ghastly hole you'll both go!"

"What can we do, if he breaks away."

"I have it." With that I turned one of the sacks on end and emptied it.

In another moment we had secured Bill in the sack. The smoke was now rolling over the top, and soon the flames would reach out and join over our heads. The branches of the top ring of trees caught alight—we were being baked in an oven! I cut and tore and threw the burning branches down the crater, and, as I did, I thought they would make a torch to set in flames the smouldering hell below!

Feeling our way in the smother of smoke and grime and charred wood that floated in the air, we got as far down as we dared—both of us holding on to the sack in which Bill Pup still struggled weakly—then we wedged ourselves in securely.

"Now then, pal, careful, open the sack just a bit, and I'll jam this wet blanket in—it may save him."

Then we each threw one of the soaked jackets over our heads and had a pull at the water bottle.

The smoke rolled down upon us and curled about and tried to choke us!

The flames met across the top, and darted downwards and tried to reach us!

I remember my pal's head dropping and his rolling over—I remember gripping his belt with one hand and the sack, in which Bill still faintly whined, with the other.

I remember lying like this, spread eagled on my back, trying to open my scorched eyes and look through the smoke and flames that were surely smothering all three of us—my pal and I and—Bill the Pup. Things seemed to finish about then——

A bark brought me to—it was a very feeble one, but still it was a bark—and it was Bill's bark! He was calling help to us, even as he had warned us! and the help came! Soon we were all right.

The fire had been seen for miles round, and men had ridden over from other farms; they had almost given us up when they reached the crater—it was Bill's smothered bark that told them we were there——

We were in a bad way, our farm had gone, our home had gone. We had been all but baked alive, and very nearly had we rolled to hell!

All we had left was a water bottle, several sacks of oranges, two old jackets, a very wet blanket and Bill the Pup!

HINTS, TIPS *and* Useful Things to KNOW

by Molly Montague

IT sometimes happens that a treasury note is thrown on to the fire by mistake and only a portion of it rescued. It is not an easy matter to recover the value of treasury notes that have become damaged, unless the numbers and ciphers are legible. If these details are complete there is usually no difficulty in recovering full value. But if any item has completely disappeared the applicant has to await developments. These involve a personal interview with a Post Office official, who asks numerous questions in relation to the mishap and also requires a written statement regarding it. His final request is for the name and address of a householder who will testify to the character of the applicant. After all these demands have been settled there is still a further long wait before the money is recovered, if at all. So be careful to look inside all envelopes, etc., before throwing them on the fire.

At this time of the year most women are waging war against an invading air force of moths, mosquitoes, wasps and flies.

Perhaps the greatest of these annoyances are the moths; their silence enables them to get on with the "good work" in peace. The moth menace is on the increase. The reason for this is that most houses these days possess boilers, which means that they are warmer than they used to be, thus making the moths far more at home.

When furniture or carpets have been attacked by moth, there is a method of guarding against further damage, and that is to have the article concerned treated to a special baking process now in use. Most big furniture stores and upholsterers undertake this work fairly inexpensively; and it really is necessary to have it done, for other articles of furniture might easily become infected in the same way.

There are liquids which can be safely sprayed upon all kinds of delicate fabrics, and even animals, and are a splendid preventive.

Ants appear to be a terrible nuisance at this time of the year. Even when one can find the hole from which they come in the garden, many women detest the thought of pouring boiling water over any living thing. Prevention is really the best cure. Buy some pure carbolic acid and a camel hair brush. Deal specially with the pantry, as it is food that attracts the insects. Take every article out and wipe with a damp cloth which has been dipped in a solution of carbolic acid and water. Wash the shelves and window-sill. Then dip the brush in the acid and smear along the edges of shelves and window frame, also on the ground at the side of the door. Paint in this manner for three days in succession which drives the ants from the house entirely.

After the Holidays.

Returning fresh from a summer holiday is just the time to do little extra jobs. Tan shoes often look woebegone after a stay at the seaside. They soil easily and sometimes fade in parts to a lighter tan than the rest of the shoe. The best course is to wash the shoes in a solution of warm soda water, using a soft dry flannel with a little soap. Dry thoroughly in the air, then rub with the inside of a banana skin; afterwards polish all over with a dark tan polish. One can then again emerge in the shoes and finish the season without a blush of shame!

An Eternal Problem.

...omically is a terrible problem ...—like an unfortunate wife of a friend of mind who suffered from rheumatism. Her children going to school require a lot of attention, and money soon flies when a paid domestic help has to be employed continuously. Some few years ago she became troubled with rheumatism, which, in spite of various treatments, steadily grew worse. Visits to expensive spas followed and all manner of ways of obtaining relief were tried unstintingly. So much so, that this young couple's income was considerably reduced. Beside this, the wife's condition, instead of improving, grew worse, and gradually developed into a chronic stage.

What a blight had descended upon that so happy home. Although doctors and specialists strove hard, the heroic little woman who had borne her harrowing burden with such fortitude could obtain no alleviation even from their expert administrations. My friends, however, remained undaunted, and continued to try everything that held out hope of relief.

Then a chance acquaintance recommended a simple form of treatment that had many remarkable cases to its merit. With fresh hope the young couple applied for a sample and a booklet describing the treatment, although it seemed that the simple little gelatine capsules which were contained in the sample could not possibly bring about results when all other forms of treatment had failed.

My Gift for the week is a remedy for Rheumatism, one of the most prevalent of modern ills.

Success!

However, "as a drowning man clutches at a floating straw," the young wife, in desperation, commenced the treatment. After the first dose she was feeling better. In a fortnight there was a marked improvement in her condition. Within two months all sign of the supposed "incurable" complaint had entirely disappeared! Thus were the young husband's increasing financial sacrifices rewarded! Seeing the remarkable results obtained, I asked more about the treatment, and have recommended it personally to many friends who have themselves obtained benefit.

The treatment is marketed under the name of "Curicones," and has been available now for over 20 years, and has earned the praise of many eminent medical men, including a Harley Street specialist.

A Chance to Play the Good Samaritan.

Now, if you yourself suffer from a rheumatic ill, or have a friend so afflicted, make use of my shopping coupon which I give below. Without delay, fill it in clearly with your name and address, or the name and address of your friend, and send it to me as directed on the coupon. Then I will arrange that you receive, free of all charge and post free, a wonderful trial supply of "Curicones." I will also arrange that this generous gift shall be accompanied by a splendid little booklet explaining the cause of rheumatic troubles. Act now, and bring relief, if not to yourself, at least to your friend.

If you don't seal the envelope, a halfpenny stamp is enough for the coupon. Good-bye for the present. MOLLY MONTAGUE.

To Molly Montague,
Dept. P.S.1.,
19, Farringdon Street, E.C.4.

Please send free of charge the "Curicones" sample and booklet you offer.

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IT did not need the efforts of the movie moguls of Hollywood to stress the fact that there is something especially intriguing about those women who are blest- or cursed- with hair of an assertive red. Milton sang of Sabrina with her amber-dropping hair, Aldrich bade a metrical goodnight to chestnut braids of hair, and Edgar Allan Poe let himself go on the subject of Helen and her hyacinth hair. But red-haired women have had no need of lyrical publicity to get into the public eye—they have always done it for themselves.

Indeed, the pages of life are illumined by those women whose hair has been so rapturously likened by a very minor poet to a "tonsorial oriflamme," and on more than a few occasions they have altered the course of history. All of which brings us to the subject of the new series of articles, the first of which appears in our next issue.

W. J. Passingham has been hot on the trail of red-haired women—women of a bygone day, we hasten to add—and he has certainly unearthed some remarkable stories concerning them. He opens the new series, "The Romance of Red-haired Women" with the tale of the unhappy Queen Caroline, consort of George IV, who was given one of the rawest of deals by her husband.

Also in next week's number you will be able to accompany that hard-boiled adventurer, Savaran, who, like Cassius, hath a lean and hungry look and is even more dangerous, on further adventures in Douglas Newton's serial.

The short stories include "Just-So Jitsu," which tells of a professional wrestler's adventures; "Knock-out at Midnight," by Frank King, and a yarn by Max Brand: "Hope the Man Wins."

YOU'RE TELLING US!

MANY a time and oft we have been flattered by the laudatory references foreigners have made to our island race. We have been told on the best authority that our police are wonderful, our countryside just too cute and our Parliament really funny without being vulgar. But when it comes to discussing our mother tongue, brickbats are apt to oust bouquets.

And who can blame the stranger in our midst for despairing of ever getting a complete grasp of it? We remember the cold perspiration that bespangled our brow on trying to explain to a seeker after truth just why the rowing races at Cambridge are known as "May Week"

when they take place during the first fortnight of June.

But it is not only the foreigner who finds himself puzzled by the English language, as witness the remarks of Mr. B. Crocker, of Bedford, who finds it has its ups and downs with a vengeance.

"The Londoner going up to Yorkshire," he points out, "meets on the journey the train bearing the Yorkshireman *up* to London. One man in a car, cart or carriage will slow down while another will pull up with the same result. The man who believes in cash transactions will pay up when dealing with a tradesman whose policy is the same except that he favours money down.

"And," he concludes, "it is up to you whether you consider the words set down by me merit half a guinea."

Naturally, he wants to know how these inconsistencies are to be explained, and we only wish we could rally round with such words of wisdom as would set his mind at rest once and for all. Alas, the springs of erudition have dried up, as far as we are concerned, but patient search has enabled us to find what we consider is as good an explanation as any.

In the preface to his dictionary, Dr. Samuel (Atta, Boswell) Johnson wrote: "I am not so lost in lexicography as to forget that words are the daughters of earth." And one has only to read the soul-searing letters inflicted on our newspapers by "Paterfamilias," "Father of Five," and the like, to realise that daughters are contrary creatures who can never be relied upon to act logically if they can help it.

While on the subject of Words—Their Uses and Abuses, let us pay heed to Mr. N. D. Snaith, of Kendal, who, taking time by the forelock, jerks it three months nearer us, to land us at what the greeting cards so optimistically term Merry Yuletide. For some, it is a time of carefree revelry when the festive board groans under its burden of rich fare and the dyspeptic groans under the burden of indigestion, but for Mr. Snaith there is a fly in the ointment, a snake in the grass, and a pebble in the plum pudding.

Having carefully checked up on his calendar, he informs us: "It is not long now to Christmas when one little problem almost as vexatious as gift choosing (for other people) will again face us. If we are quick on the draw we will call our 'Merry Christmas' before they can get one in on us.

"But," he adds, with sweet reasonableness, "we can't *always* be first, so I ask you, is there any sensible alternative to that trite, enfeebled reply: 'Same to you'? Long before Christmas Day, one is sick of uttering it, genuine though the sentiment may be. Is there no escape?"

Answer adjudged correct: Yes, Mr. N. D. Snaith, of Kendal, there is. You can find several solutions to your problem, any one of which should enable you to deal satisfactorily with your well-wishers.

One way—but it is scarcely to be recommended—is to assume an expresson of such intense, Scroogelike malevolence that strong men will turn away shuddering

and mothers will gather their little ones to their skirts, if they can reach as high. Another and more satisfactory method is to effect a deal with some firm making crackers or other seasonable goods. Then, when greeted with the words, "A Merry Christmas," you hastily add: "Is ensured by all who buy Banger's Crackers, filled with amusing caps, toys and trinkets."

Deftly producing a few small handbills with which the firm has provided you, you thrust an assortment into your friends' outstretched hand and raising your hat with a sweeping, old-world charm, you sail serenely on your way, conscious of having done a friend a good turn. But perhaps the simplest method is merely to smile sweetly on being greeted and say: "And a very happy St. Stephen's Day." This will inevitably gain for you the reputation of being quite an expert on feasts and fasts, and end the backchat once and for all.

And now along comes "Traveller," of London, S.W.15, to tell us the story of a compatriot he once met while staying at an hotel in Rome. "She was a little old lady with the most charming of smiles and a quite touching eagerness to see all the sights of the Eternal City. Day after day, she would set out with her guide book and return in the evening to write up her experiences in a large diary.

"Anxious to get some of her impressions, I asked her, on her last day in Rome, which of the many places she had visited appealed to her the most. After some thought she told me she had liked the Colosseum the best. 'And what impressed you most about it?' I inquired. She smiled up at me as she replied: 'Its wonderful ventilation.'

"I'm still wondering if that smile was quite as sweetly innocent as it appeared to be!"

YOU'RE TELLING US! Half a guinea is paid for each letter or quotation printed on this page. Address: "Readers' Letters," "Passing Show," 93 Long Acre, London, W.C.2. Please state whether Mr., [illegible]

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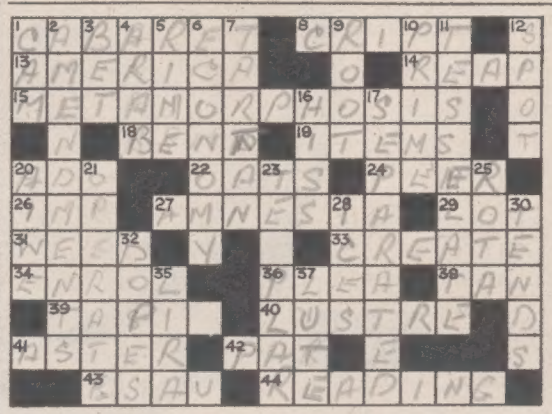

CLUES ACROSS

1. An entertainment.
8. Underground chamber.
13. This is across the ocean.
14. Gather.
15. Splits poor hats (anagram).
18. Put out of straight.
19. Details.
20. May be about nothing.
22. Food for horses.
24. Man of rank.
26. Small creature.
27. Loss of memory.
29. A consignment or collection.
31. A tall grass.
33. Bring into being.
34. Register or record.
36. Earnest request.
38. Should be squared for century.
39. An animal.
40. Brightness.
41. Stare may bloom into this.
42. Slight blow.
43. Biblical character.
44. You are doing this at this moment.

CLUES DOWN

1. Projection on a wheel or shaft.
2. Alterations, possibly improvements.
3. What is won by this is also lost.
4. Man of the desert, perhaps.
5. Take frost out of 10 down.
6. May mean looking after the pence.
7. Would make a coat of many colours.
9. Basic part.
10. Of first rank or importance.
11. Make up in squares.
12. A mark.
16. Sibilant sound.
17. Placed apart.
20. Yorkshire river.
21. Work or perform.
23. One of a religious order.
25. Mechanical repetition.
28. These are sweet and cool.
30. Takes care of.
32. Stupefies or perhaps poisons.
35. Rail into coinage.
37. String instrument.

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NED RED BASKS
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OPPORTUNE TAR W
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YESTERDAY ENDS

Solution to last week's puzzle

B259 | 18 | L.S.13

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HERE is, undoubtedly, one of the most outstanding offers! In my 55 years' experience as a dispenser of the world's best prescriptions, I have never heard of such a unique and generous offer as I am now making to you and the other readers of "Passing Show." It includes the following :—

(*a*) **MONEY BACK IF NOT SATISFIED**

(*b*) **TRIAL SIZE PACKAGE FREE**

THUS: You order the trial size (*by post, using the attached coupon*) of any prescription (trial size) mentioned below. You send cash. In return the package is sent to you POST FREE and at the same time a second package of the same prescription is sent with it. *This is your FREE TRIAL PACKAGE.* If, after testing, you are not satisfied, you simply send back the unopened package and your money is returned. The trial size is the smallest size listed. If you are satisfied, naturally you keep the package you have paid for and thus receive *two for the price of one.* **Accept this generous offer now. Hurry. Act at once.**

ORDER THOSE YOU NEED NOW!

You are not confined to one variety. You may order two or three or as many varieties as you wish—a trial size of each on the same generous terms. Don't delay. Get fit now under this unique offer. Note:—**This offer only applies to the trial sizes. Other sizes must be paid for in full.**

COUPON *Dated* .....

To Mr. Wm. Shadforth, Ph.C., M.P.S., Governing Director of the

SHADFORTH PRESCRIPTION SERVICE LTD.

63, Grove Rd., Bow, London, E.3.

Please send me as follows:

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For which I enclose the sum of

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Name.....

Address.....

17.9.38 .....

BANISH LIVER TROUBLES

CONSTIPATION, BILIOUSNESS, SICK HEADACHE.

PERIODICAL bilious attacks, constipation, sick headache and bowel indigestion indicate a sluggish liver, and for this nothing equals this pill. Take it with each meal and you will soon be better. This is a useful formula to keep in the house for family use. Get it now and prove its worth. It is known as **Shadforth Prescription (No. 2,000).** Prices **6d.** (36), **1/3** (100), 3/- (300 pills).

Booklet (*P.S.* 222), *post free.*

BRIDGING WOMAN'S DANGER YEARS

Smooths Out the Problems of Middle Life.

Just the thing to get you through those difficult years and re-establish your health. A gentle tonic for stomach, heart, nerves, and blood—exactly what your doctor gives you. Does not purge or constipate. Improves appetite and complexion. Removes depression and languor. Gives courage, hope and a new lease of life. Also the best tonic for anæmic girls and nursing or expectant mothers. **Ask for Shadforth Prescription No. 2457—the Critical Time Tonic.** In boxes at 1/- (25), **2/6** (72), **4/6** (144).

Booklet (*No. P.S.* 345), *post free.*

RHEUMATISM

HEADACHE—SCIATICA—NEURITIS.

All Nerve Pains, including those of Neuralgia, Colds, Influenza, Headache, Sciatica, Neuritis, etc., are promptly relieved by **"Shadspro" Compound,** the new pain-killer **(No. 263).** This formula is non-purgative and does not upset the stomach. It quickly relieves pain and renders movement possible. It reduces inflammation and temperature, and kills bacteria. Prices **6d.** (10), **1/3** (25), **2/-** (50), **3/6** (100 tablets).

In exceptionally painful cases use a **Neuritis Cachet (No. 622A).** Prices 3/- (6), and **5/9** (12).

The Shadforth Booklet on "Neuritis" (*No. P.S.* 236) *post free.*

SKIN DISEASES

(1) **Antiseptic (No. 1449),** in tablet form to make bath. Price **1/-, 1/6** and **2/9.**

(2) **Psoriasis Ointment (No. 850).** A stimulating antiseptic. Price **1/9** and **4/-.**

(3) Wash regularly until better with **Birch Tar Soap (No. 930).** Price **1/-.**

(4) Take Potassium internally for a few weeks in the form of **"Vi-Salts"** (the new potassium table salt). **Prescription No. 1250.** Price **6d.** and **1/3.**

Special Booklet on Psoriasis (*No. P.S.* 227) *post free on request.*

THAT SLIM LINE

can still be yours by means of the successful slimming Course, the

SHADFORTH DOUBLE-DUPLEX or FOUR-FOLD TREATMENT FOR OBESITY (No. 575/DD).

This is not one of those extravagant treatments where the cost is never ending, and the result disappointing—it is a **safe home remedy** that **will bring your figure down to that slim line of which you used to be so proud.** It simply costs a few shillings, but nevertheless is the most successful and scientific treatment for Obesity ever recommended. Price **7/9** and **14/6.** Ask for the **Shadforth Obesity Treatment No. 575/DD.**

The Shadforth Booklet on "Obesity" (*No. P.S.* 255) *post free on request.*

"Shadforths" famous Prescriptions may also be obtained from Boot's, Timothy White's & Taylors, Gamages and your Local Chemist, who will either hold stocks or will gladly obtain on request.

LATE SUMMER HEART WEAKNESS

Don't Risk a Collapse

DOES your heart palpitate? Are you tired from morning to night? Sleepless yet needing sleep? Without appetite yet needing the strength which foods can bring? You must not go on like this! Take "Blue Lion Fox Nuts," the modern tonic which pulls you together in a few hours. Frazzled nerves full of vim; gloomy thoughts gone; faith strengthened, hope renewed before nightfall; life worth living to-morrow. It is the Doctor's Best Tonic for heart, nerves, stomach and kidneys—it prevents palpitation, flutterings, faintness, tremblings, run-down condition, stops your falling-to-pieces feeling. Don't imagine yourself into an illness; have a good rest, take this tonic, and be normal in a few days. **Ask for "Blue Lion Fox Nuts." Shadforth Prescription No. 632.** Prices **1/-** (25), **1/9** (50), **2/6** (72), **4/6** (144).

The Shadforth Booklet on Heart Troubles (*No. P.S.* 320) *post free.*

THE WORLD'S BEST HEALTH, HEART, AND NERVE TONIC.

NERVES

ABSENT-MINDEDNESS, LOSS OF MEMORY, DEBILITY, DEPRESSION, LASSITUDE

Nourish your Nerves and each new day will bring renewed Joy in Living

YOU can pull through. Depression, Brain-Fag, Loss of Memory, Debility and Neurasthenia and that "tired feeling" are conditions and not diseases. Shadphos Tonic Tablets—act like magic. You are brighter in an hour and a new man in two days. A proved remedy. Prices **1/-** (12), **1/9** (25), **3/3** (50), **6/-** (100), and **17/-** (300 tablets). **Prescription 470.**

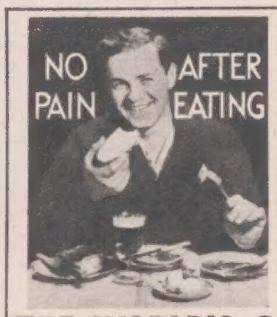
Special Book dealing with Nerve Troubles (*P.S.* 323) *post free.*

KIDNEY TROUBLE

WHY THOSE DISTURBED NIGHTS?

KIDNEY and Bladder troubles can be relieved. Quickly, surely. Until you have tried **"Shadforters"** you may be enduring endless suffering from misery—mental as well as physical. There is not an ingredient in them that can do you the slightest harm. Cooling, cleansing, healing, **"Shadforters"** have been the successful remedy for Cystitis, Prostatitis, Gravel, Gall Stones, Scalding and Associated Liver, Kidney, Uric Acid and Bladder troubles and disturbed nights. Try them to-night. Prices **1/4** (25), **2/6** (50), **4/6** (100) **13/-** (300).

Mr. Shadforth's valuable book (*P.S.* 326) *on Bladder and Kidney Troubles, post free.*



EAT WHAT YOU LIKE

WITHOUT INDIGESTION ACIDITY, GASTRITIS

Thousands of sufferers from Acidity, Heartburn, Sour Stomach, Fermentative Dyspepsia, Gastric Catarrh, Wind or Flatulence, Fullness After Meals, and all forms of acid indigestion have been cured by the SHADFORTH ACIDITY PRESCRIPTION No. 1077. POPULARLY KNOWN AS "WHITE LIONS." Dispensed after the successful formula used in hospitals and clinics by prominent physicians, they give prompt relief and comfort. This prescription is non-purgative. You feel easier in five minutes. Note the steady improvement, clean tongue, moist mouth and throat; flatulence vanished, long, sad face replaced by such broad sweet smiles that your friends marvel at the magic change.

Prices: **6d.** (24), **1/4** (72), **2/6** (144), **7/-** (432 Lions), with Directions.

THE WORLD'S GREATEST REMEDY FOR INDIGESTION

Special Book on Indigestion Cures, and on Treating of Digestive Troubles (*P.S.*314), *post free.*

CORNS

WASH the feet well with hot water every night, using **Shadforth Formalin Soap (No. 940**—costs **1/-**). Dry the feet and corns well with a rough towel and afterwards rub in a little Corn Salve (**No. 801**—costs **7½d.**).

The Shadforth Booklet on "Corns" (*P.S.* 297) *post free.*

ECZEMA

For dry, wet or scaly eczema, an approved remedy is found in **Eczema Ointment (No. 1389).** It is also excellent for Dandruff or Scurf. Prices **6d., 1/-** and **1/9.**

Special New Formula for Vesicular Eczema **(No. 792N).** Price **2/6.**

Booklet on Eczema Treatment (No. *P.S.* 272) *free on request.*

These prescriptions are obtainable privately packed and post free (abroad extra) at these prices from

SHADFORTH PRESCRIPTION SERVICE LTD

DISPENSING CHEMISTS

(Dept. P.S. 140), 49, KING WILLIAM STREET, LONDON BRIDGE, E.C.4.

Becontree Heath: 1148 Green Lane
Bow, E.3: 63 Grove Road
Chadwell Heath: 216 High Road
East Ham, E.6: Opp. Town Hall
Gidea Park: 2 Heath Park Parade
Hornchurch: 4 Highlands Parade
Romford: 44 London Road
Walthamstow, E.17: 168 High St.
West Ham, E.15: 1a Durban Road

HAY FEVER

COLD IN THE NOSE, CATARRHAL INFECTIONS AND CONGESTIONS.

An effective nasal antiseptic of the ephedrine class is now provided in "Shadrinol." It is packed with a pipette for placing drops in the nose and with a spray for applying to the back of the mouth and throat. It quickly relieves Nasal Catarrh, Head Colds, Coryza, Hay Fever, Hoarseness, Laryngitis (occasionally Bronchitis and Asthma) and general catarrhal congestions of the mucous membranes of nose and throat).

Complete with directions. Price **1/3** (including pipette), and **2/6** (including pipette and atomizer).

Prescription No. **1445XL.**

The Shadforth Booklet (*P.S.* 348) *on this subject is supplied post free.*

ARTIFICIAL TEETH

KEPT CLEAN.

with Shadforth Special Tooth Powder, prepared specially for that purpose. Recommended by Dental Specialists. (Prescription No. **994**), at **1/-**

The Shadforth Booklet relating to the subject (*P.S.* 276), *post free.*

False Teeth Hold Fast

all day long when you sprinkle on Shadforth's Dental Plate Powder (Prescription No. **994A**)—they fit snugly—comfortably—they cannot slip. Prescribed by world's leading dentists.

Price **1/-** and **2/6** per box.

HEALTHY BLOOD

100 p.c. Purity. 100 p.c. Vitality.

HERE is the Shadforth known, admitted and approved remedy for blood troubles. It eliminates rheumatic tendencies and soothes painful parts. It heals ulcers, sores, boils, eczema, and skin disfigurements. It renews the blood, and blood is life. Ask for **Shadforth Blood Purifying Tablets (No. 1262).** Prices **2/6, 4/6** and **13/-.**

COMPLEXION TROUBLES

depend firstly on the blood beneath them, and only secondly on cream and powder. The best remedy for muddy or sallow complexions, acne or blackheads, boils, redness of skin and some forms of eczema, pimples and even carbuncles, is dispensed in dainty tablets as **Shadforth Prescription No. 442 (Skin Tonic Tablets).** They cleanse the blood. Try them for a couple of weeks and note, with satisfaction, the great improvement in your complexion. Don't cover up faults—cleanse them from within.

Prices **1/-** (36), **1/9** (72), **3/3** (144).

The best soap to use while taking the tablets is Shadforth's Anti-Blackhead (Milk of Sulphur) Soap. Prescription No. **1064.** Price **1/3.**

The Shadforth Book on Skin and Complexion Troubles (*No. P.S.* 322) *post free on request.*

NEVERILL

OLD SALTS

(Prescription 565K)

A Spoonful a Day Keeps the Doctor Away. The best morning Saline for Biliousness, Constipation, Disordered Stomach, Sluggish Liver, Bladder and Kidney Troubles, Gout, Rheumatism, Feverishness, Obesity, etc. Drink it **first thing every morning.** Tasteless with your Tea.

For Sparkling Eyes, Clear Complexion, Tip-top Fitness and Joie de Vivre.

Prices, post free in air-tight canisters, **3d., 6d.,** and **1/-.**

The prescriptions published on this page are not intended to usurp the function and rightful position of the registered medical practitioner.

If RAYMOND MASSEY offered you a cigarette, it would be a

De Reszke

- of course !

MINORS PLAIN, CORK, OR RED-TIPPED

15 FOR **6**D.

The 10-minute smoke for those who prefer ***'something better'***

MAJORS (large size), 10 for 6d. • TURKS 10 for 6d.
AMERICANS (hand made) 25 for 1/10

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